

'Saudi king's health seems shaky after '95 stroke'

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, still suffering from a 1995 stroke, often appears unwell when meeting visitors and leaves the daily affairs of the kingdom to his crown prince and defence minister, top diplomats in Riyadh said.

"The king is not in good health," one diplomat told Reuters, echoing comments made to Reuters in the last few days by other senior diplomats based in Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter.

"Last week he received 24 ambassadors for accreditation and he wasn't his old self," the diplomat added.

The diplomats said the ambassadors who over two days presented their credentials to King Fahd, 75, reported he was frail, unfocused and had a very limited attention span.

They said his remarks

were punctuated by long, awkward pauses and absence of mind. He also no longer gave his traditional long monologue about life in the kingdom, with which he used to greet all new ambassadors, they said.

The diplomats said the king had good days when he appeared to be well, but added his condition changed daily.

"He has his moments, sometimes he is good, sometimes he is out of it," one diplomat said.

The diplomats said succession appeared to be clear in the kingdom, with the king's half-brother Prince Abdullah, 73, and his full brother Defence Minister Prince Sultan next in line to the throne.

They said Prince Abdullah's smooth transition to temporary rule after King

Fahd's stroke put Saudis and foreign governments at ease.

An orderly transfer of power in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf's economic and political heavyweight, is widely considered important to stability in the region which sits on 45 per cent of the world's oil reserves.

"There is no battle for succession among the top two figures in the country, Crown Prince Abdullah and Prince Sultan," a diplomat said.

King Fahd's health has been a cause of concern for several years. A stroke in November 1995 put him in hospital for a few days and in early 1996 he handed over the affairs of state to Crown Prince Abdullah. He reassumed power seven weeks later.

The king, overweight and diabetic, has long used a

walking stick to relieve discomfort from an arthritic knee.

The king, in power since 1982, often chairs the cabinet's weekly meetings which are carried on state television.

The diplomats said his condition made decision-making difficult, as final authority still rested with the monarch.

"Crown Prince Abdullah and Prince Sultan are doing the day-to-day running of things just fine, but the big decisions still rest with the king," one diplomat said.

"Abdullah and Sultan do all the work," another said. "No one dares tell (the king) he should step down. This is part of the way the system works here. But because King Fahd is still officially in charge, this leads to stagnation."

Other diplomats said one

question that remained was who would replace Prince Sultan as number three.

"The only issue is who would take Sultan's place... Prince Nayef is next in terms of pecking order, but Prince Salman is also in serious consideration," one said.

Prince Nayef is the kingdom's interior minister, but diplomats said he was not as popular as Prince Salman, the powerful governor of Riyadh. Both are also sons of the late founder of Saudi Arabia, King Abdul Aziz Al Saud.

"Salman is popular. He heads a number of foundations, is active in giving grants to the Palestinians and Bosnia. He has a high profile," he said. "He is much more than just a regional prince. He is a man on the rise."



FOOD FESTIVAL: An Israeli model is painted to look like a banana tree for a Tel Aviv food festival late Tuesday. Thousands flocked to the trendy event where luxury restaurants sold dishes for a fraction of their regular price (Reuters photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

King to visit France June 12

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein will visit France June 12, French Ambassador Bernard Bajeot told an Arabic daily. The ambassador said King Hussein will hold talks with French officials on the Middle East peace process, the European role in the process, investment opportunities in Jordan and cooperation in the field of tourism between the two countries.

Arafat receives Jordanian envoy

GAZA (Petra) — Palestine National Authority (PNA) President Yasser Arafat on Wednesday received Ziyad Majali, head of the Jordan Representation Office in Gaza. President Arafat asked him to convey a verbal message to His Majesty King Hussein regarding efforts to put the Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations back on track.

Syrian vice president visits Libya

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Syrian vice president Abdul Halim Khaddam arrived in Tripoli Wednesday to give Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi a message from Syrian President Hafez Assad on the Middle East, officials said. The Libyan minister for Arab unity, Jomna Fezzani, greeted Mr. Khaddam who arrived at Tripoli airport on an internal flight after travelling from Morocco via Tunisia. Libya is under an international air embargo for refusing to hand over to the United States or Britain two suspects in the 1988 bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland of a Pan Am aircraft in which 270 people were killed. The Syrian official, who is making a tour of North African countries, has already visited Tunis, Algiers and Rabat, where he presented the heads of states with similar messages from Mr. Assad.

Egyptian liar receives 10 years in jail

CAIRO (AFP) — An unemployed Egyptian man who lied to Culture Minister Faruq Hosni about unearthing a major archaeological find was sentenced to 10 years in jail Wednesday, court sources said. Hamdi Abdul Azim, 50, was also sentenced in absentia on charges of carrying fake documents. In September he presented himself to Mr. Hosni using a false name and said he had made an important archaeological find near Aswan, 900 kilometres south of Cairo and home to major Pharaonic tombs. Mr. Hosni flew to Aswan to meet Abdul Azim and check out the site but the man had disappeared. The court charged that Abdul Azim was hoping to get financial compensation for his fake discovery.

Cairo favours good ties with Iran

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa said Wednesday his country would like to establish good relations with Iran after Iranian president-elect Mohammad Khatami said his country opposes terrorism. Mr. Mousa said Mr. Khatami's statement was a step "in the right direction". The minister also said Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak told Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati during his visit to Cairo earlier this month that there were still problems preventing better ties between their countries. Mr. Mubarak told Mr. Velayati that two conditions must be fulfilled in order for Egypt to normalise relations with Iran — the first concerning "the matter of terrorism" and the second the settlement of Iran's conflict with the United Arab Emirates over sovereignty over three strategic Gulf islands.

Pro-Syrian militia says it has captured Israeli agent

TYRE (AFP) — The pro-Syrian Amal movement said it seized an Israeli agent Tuesday from the Israeli-occupied "security zone" in southern Lebanon. A statement from the Shiite militia identified the agent as Lebanese national Mustafa Hassan Sayyed and said he was snatched in a military operation from Kesir in the central sector of the buffer zone.

"He is one of the principal agents of their Mossad (Israeli intelligence services) for whom he has been working for the past few years," it said.

The group said the operation

had been prepared over the past three months.

An Amal spokesman told AFP that the prisoner will be shown in a press conference, probably Wednesday.

A spokesman for the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army militia, which helps the Jewish state patrol the buffer zone, said it had no information on the incident.

Also Tuesday, guerrillas of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah militia attacked an Israeli foot patrol in the border zone, security sources said.

Fighters from the Islamic resistance, Hizbollah's mili-

tary wing, fired at least 10 mortar rounds at the patrol at Houla in the border enclave, the Shiite organisation said in a statement.

An SLA source said the attack caused no casualties.

The Israeli artillery retaliated by firing 30 shells on the outskirts of the villages of Majdal Silt, Wadi Al Kaissiyeh and Jmaimeh, east of the southern port city of Tyre, security sources said.

Hizbollah and Amal have pledged to continue waging a guerrilla war to force Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon.

Egypt, Libya sign accord on gold prospecting

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt signed an accord with Libya to search for gold and iron ore in the Oweinat region on the border between the two countries.

Industry Minister Suleiman Reda told the daily Al Jumhuriya that he signed the agreement with his Libyan counterpart

Muhammed Azuz Tuesday during a visit to Tripoli.

The head of the Egyptian Industrial Union, Mohammad Farid Khamis, told the newspaper that businessmen from the two countries also signed contracts to set up joint enterprises with a total capital of \$35 million.

Mr. Reda, heading a large economic delegation, began

a three-day visit to Libya Sunday, hoping to boost bilateral trade and industrial ties. In December, the two neighbours signed agreements for joint investments totalling \$500 million and created a committee to coordinate trade and investment. The investment deals include projects in the textile, steel, petrochemi-

cal, construction materials and consumer electrical goods sectors as well as a tourist complex in Libya with a capital of 200 million dollars. Egypt exported 58 million dollars in goods to Libya in 1995 and imported \$99 million worth, according to the Economy Ministry.

Special committee on Israeli practices to visit Egypt, Jordan and Syria

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories will carry out a field mission to Egypt, Jordan and Syria from May 30 to June 9.

Since its establishment in 1968, the Special Committee has repeatedly tried to win the cooperation of the Government of Israel but has consistently been denied such cooperation and access to the occupied territories.

Nonetheless, the committee has been able to benefit from the cooperation of the governments of Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

Without direct access to the occupied territories, the members of the Special Committee base their reports on relevant articles appearing in the Israeli press as well as the articles appearing in the Arab press published in the occupied territories. In addition the Special Committee includes in its reports the excerpts of testimony gathered

during visits to the neighbouring states from persons having first hand and recent experience of the human rights situation in the occupied territories. The Committee formulates conclusions containing its evaluations of the situation as well as recommendations.

The Special Committee plans to hold hearings in Cairo on May 31 and June 1 and Amman from June 3 to 6; hearings in Syria have been scheduled on June 7 and 8. During its stay in Jordan, the committee plans to interview persons from the West Bank at the King Hussein Bridge.

The Special Committee holds three series of annual meetings, the second of which is combined with a mission to the area. The Special Committee will adopt its second periodic report during this field mission, while the annual report will be adopted during the third series of meetings scheduled for August 1997.

Israeli convicted for putting curse on Rabin

TEL AVIV (R) — The man who put a curse on Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin a month before he was assassinated was convicted in an Israeli court Wednesday of violating the prevention of terrorism act, a court spokesman said.

"He was convicted under... the prevention of terrorism act," spokesman Moshe Gorali told Reuters. "The conviction relates to the interview he gave on television about the pulsa denura (curse) succeeding." Mr. Gorali said the section of the act violated was that against encourag-

ing violence.

Avigdor Eskin, according to local news reports at the time, stood outside Rabin's house on the eve of the Jewish high holy day of Yom Kippur in 1995 and cursed Rabin with the ancient curse of pulsa denura — Aramaic for "lashes of fire." The curse Eskin put on Rabin read in part — "and on him, Yitzhak, son of Rosa, known as Rabin, we have permission... to demand from angels of destruction that they take a sword to this wicked man... to kill him... for handing over the

land of Israel to our enemies."

He said the curse generally worked within 30 days. Roughly one month later, on Nov. 4, right-wing Jewish law student Yigal Amir gunned down Rabin after a peace rally in Tel Aviv.

Amir said he shot Rabin to prevent him handing Israeli-occupied lands to Palestinian rule under a deal signed with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

Rabin's successor Shimon Peres swiftly carried out the interim peace deal,

handing chunks of the West Bank to the PNA.

Mr. Gorali said Mr. Eskin would be sentenced next week. The justice Ministry said he could receive a maximum sentence of six years. Rabin was the first Israeli prime minister to be assassinated.

Mr. Peres subsequently lost May 1996 national elections to right-wing Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who opposed the Rabin-led government's interim peace deals with the PNA.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 French programmes
16:00 NBA
17:00 Out of This World
18:00 French Programme
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Parenthood
20:30 Cinema, Cinema
21:10 Kung Fu
22:00 News in English
22:35 Feature Film — "Family Rescue"
23:59 Turata

PRAYER TIMES

03:55 Fajr
08:27 (Sunrise) Duha
12:33 Dhuhur
16:14 Asr
19:39 Maghreb
21:11 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweidieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
637785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652836.
Armenian Catholic Church
Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church
Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel.
771751.
Armenian International Church
Tel. 827136
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical
Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel.
654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel.
675691.
The Evangelical Local Church
in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel.
614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Moderate weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Mini/Max. Temperatures
Amman 16/30
Aqaba 24/38
Deserts 15/35
Jordan Valley 22/36

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 30, Aqaba 37 Humidity
readings: Amman 35 per cent,
Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Sa'ad Thawiq 786285
Dr. Hanna Mansour 750197
Dr. Ali Shukri 808863
Dr. Nidal Dabbeh 827195
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637053
Naioudk pharmacy 623672
Al Saiman pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy 773111
ZARQA:

Dr. Rafiq Atallah 994424
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 642481/6
Akkleh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/25
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:15 Sanas (RJ)
10:10 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:30 Bombay (RJ)
10:30 New Delhi (RJ)
10:55 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:05 Beirut (RJ)
11:30 Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
15:40 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:10 Moscow (RJ)
17:30 London (RJ)
18:15 Casablanca (RJ)
19:10 Athens (RJ)
19:55 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
20:40 Rome (RJ)
20:45 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:10 Moscow (RJ)
07:20 Beirut (RJ)
11:45 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)
12:10 Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:25 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:30 Rome (RJ)
13:00 Paris (RJ)
13:20 London (RJ)
13:20 Athens (RJ)
21:00 Abu Dhabi, Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:20 Larnaca (RJ)
21:20 Jeddah (RJ)
22:50 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

Other Flights

04:00 Athens (OA)
06:15 Istanbul (TK)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
09:10 London (BA)
14:30 Riyadh (SV)
14:45 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (GF)
15:30 Annaba (Algeria) (AF)
17:00 Rome (AZ)
18:00 Damascus, Dubai (EK)
22:25 Information, Cairo (MS)
22:50 Tel Aviv (LY)
02:30 Amsterdam (KL)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
10:25 London (BA)

Queen attends concert

AMMAN (J.T.) — The National Music Conservatory (NMC), in cooperation with Pennsylvania State University, Wednesday held a concert, attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor, at the Royal Cultural Centre, a Royal Court statement said.

The concert, which featured the NMC Orchestra under the baton of visiting conductor Dr. Pu-qui Jiang of Pennsylvania State University (PSU), included a special appearance by solo violinist James Lyon, a faculty member of PSU, as well as the conducting debut of Mr. Fouad Fakhouri, the assistant conductor of the Penn State Philharmonic Orchestra.

The performance was preceded by a pre-concert lecture, to enhance the musical knowledge and appreciation of concert-goers by presenting a critique of the pieces to be performed, the statement said.

The NMC and PSU are currently discussing plans for increasing cooperation through the exchange of music faculty and the allocation of scholarships for NMC students, according to the statement.

Senator Laila Sharaf accompanied the Queen to the event.

Leading Jordanian economist passes away

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Mohammad Ali Bdeir, a leading Jordanian entrepreneur and economic figure, passed away last Tuesday, leaving a distinctive economic legacy.

Mr. Bdeir was born in Damascus in 1909 and moved to Amman with his father in 1915 where he received his primary education in the Kutab school.

He used to attend lectures every Thursday at the Kutab school in exchange for his 'enrolment fee' of a piece of bread, flour or eggs.

He later moved back to Damascus where he continued his studies, graduating from high school in Beirut.

Once back in Jordan, he concentrated his efforts on the establishment of companies and associations.

Mr. Bdeir's father, a textile retailer and a contractor had moved to Amman in 1915 where he provided workers in the Higazi railway line with food, textiles and work uniforms as well as opening a grocery shop.

Mr. Bdeir used to attend gatherings with King Abdullah, founder of the Kingdom, at the Royal Diwan on Fridays, to discuss intellectual themes and national education.

In one of his latest interviews, Mr. Bdeir was quoted as saying that "we used to consult [King Abdullah] with the most minute details and were always rewarded with his help as he concentrated all of his efforts to achieve the Arab nation's unity and security."

"In the past half century, Jordan has witnessed tremendous development all due to the efforts of His Majesty King Hussein," he added.

Mr. Bdeir opened a hardware store for construction products in 1927, his first commercial undertaking.

In 1930, he established the first carpentry business in Amman, and in 1931 he co-founded the Jordanian Tobacco Company which, in 1948, was partially sold due to war-related circumstances.

Mr. Bdeir was elected as a member of Amman's Chamber of Trade in 1933, of which organisation he was later elected vice president and then chairman.

He played a major role in establishing Jordan's Electric Company in 1938.

That which urged him to establish the company was the "unhappy feeling I get every time I come back to Amman from Cairo or Baghdad where all the streets are illuminated while Amman is pitch black."

Mr. Bdeir first lit the streets of Amman through renting a simple motor at night. Then, along with other interested persons and share holders, they bought land in 1940 and established the company with a capital of JD 2,500.

He was chairman of that company until his death.

Mr. Bdeir also established the Islamic Intellectual Committee in 1946 which later became the Islamic Scientific College.

In 1947, he established the Jordan Phosphate Company and the Jordan Cement Company.

The Jordan Insurance Company and the Jordan Refinery Petrol Company were also established by Mr. Bdeir in 1950 as a cooperative with other share holders.

Saeed Mufli, a friend of Mr. Bdeir's, convinced the latter to enter parliamentary elections in 1951 in which he surprisingly received more votes than the former, also a candidate, and won a seat.

Mohammad Bdeir is survived by his wife, five children, 31 grandchildren and 31 great grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Wednesday.

Jordan eager to remove trade obstacles — Majali

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday stated that Jordan is eager to join other Arab countries in removing trade obstacles and is encouraging the private sector to achieve economic integration with the Arab World.

"Jordan was among the first Arab states which approved the idea of establishing an Arab common market and has this year been active in pan-Arab attempts to revive the common market," the premier stated.

Dr. Majali was meeting with the heads of delegations from Arab states, attending a three-day pan-Arab seminar on the role of the private sector in development.

He noted that national economic policies have not changed in regards to privatisation and emphasised that the government will continue to protect consumers from monopolies.

The government is attempting to facilitate the privatisation process, the premier added.

"In the past, Jordan's economic endeavours were focused on ensuring national security — a task for which the public sector was responsible," Dr.

Majali stated. "However, currently the private sector is playing a leading economic role."

"We support all efforts to promote trade and close cooperation with Arab countries in trade and economic fields," he maintained. "This is the only way to terminate present divisions among Arabs."

Dr. Majali declared himself optimistic that the Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Trade will further efforts towards economic integration and trade exchanges in the Arab World.

During the meeting, Chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry Khaldoun Abu Hassan presented the prime minister with the Jordanian National Industries shield.

Dr. Majali Tuesday formally inaugurated the Jordanian Industrial Fair in which 130 firms are currently participating and heard a briefing, given by Mr. Abu Hassan, outlining the progress of industrial development in the Kingdom.

Industrial development, Mr. Abu Hassan stated, accounts for 22 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Delegates from Egypt,



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday meets with the heads of delegations from Arab states, attending a three-day pan-Arab seminar on the role of the private sector in development (Petra photo)

Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Libya, Morocco, Algeria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain Tuesday attended the opening of the Jordanian Industrial Fair in Amman.

Earlier Tuesday, Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs and Minister of Administrative Development Jawad Anani opened the semi-

nar, lauding the opportunity available for the private sector to play a leading role in bolstering the Arab economy and increasing the volume of trade among Arab states.

He said that Jordan calls for further capital investments in Arab countries, reduction of customs barriers and the creation of a common market for the Arab World.

Dr. Anani said that joint

Arab action should attempt to end Israeli hegemony on the Palestinian economy and end the embargo imposed on Iraq, Sudan and Libya as that embargo obstructs joint Arab action and adversely affects Arab nations.

Jordan, he said, is ready to facilitate, guarantee and protect investments.

The Kingdom expects total Arab investments to Jordan to reach \$500 mil-

lion this year, according to Dr. Anani.

Chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce Haidar Murad echoed calls for increasing trade in the Arab World, stating that trade exchanges last year did not exceed eight per cent of the overall trade between Arab countries and the rest of the world.

Women prepare for parliamentary life

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

ZARQA — In an effort to help women better prepare for parliamentary life, fifty women from four governorates Wednesday commenced a two-day workshop in Zarqa to better understand their roles and rights in the upcoming elections.

The women, representing various sectors, including official and non-governmental organisations, will be lectured by experts on several topics, ranging from methods of running an election campaign to understanding the election law as it concerns women.

The workshop, entitled "Jordanian Women and the Parliamentary Elections," has been organised and held by the General Jordanian Women's Federation (GJWF), and Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre (UJRC) in cooperation with the Canadian embassy in Amman, at the Zarqa Chamber of Commerce.

"This workshop is designed to increase women's awareness and understanding of the democratic process in Jordan," GJWF President

Nadia Bushnaq told participants.

Each woman should know that she has an important role and duty towards her future as well as a right to vote for whom she wants and in whom she believes, Ms. Bushnaq said.

"It is our aim to support women to reach decision-making positions in order for them to amend some of the discriminatory laws against women," she added.

"Most women are aware and want to effect change, but traditional, cultural and social beliefs as well as the fact that men have the final say, especially in political issues, are hindering women from achieving their goals and reaching decision-making positions," she asserted.

Regarding elections in Zarqa, Ms. Bushnaq could not confirm who or how many women are planning to run for the House.

However, she did state that things have changed over the past four years.

"More effort is being exerted from various institutes and organisations to prepare women for the upcoming elec-

tions and increase awareness of their rights as candidates and as voters," Ms. Bushnaq said.

Eid Qataneb told participants that women's participation in any field should depend on their level of awareness and understanding of general topics and universal demands.

Zarqa Chamber of Commerce President Ibrahim Taqiddin affirmed that women should unite in their efforts to achieve a vital role in the upcoming parliamentary elections.

"Women represent at least half of the society, and should exploit this factor to secure greater women's representation in Parliament and decision-making positions," Mr. Taqiddin stated.

Taleb Awad, of the UJRC, informed the gathering that three similar workshops will be held in Irbid, Karak and Amman over the next two months.

Today, participants will divide into several groups to discuss obstacles in electoral participation, the role of women's organisations in supporting candidates, and mass mobilisation methods.

Foreign minister urges donor nations to extend increased aid to Kingdom

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh Wednesday urged donor nations to extend more aid to Jordan to stimulate economic development efforts and enable the Kingdom to implement its economic restructuring programme as agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

During a meeting with the ambassadors of Japan, Canada, Switzerland, Norway, Australia and South Korea, Dr. Tarawneh maintained that Jordan needs help to attain a free and integrated economy.

He stated that the economic reforms policy is a main component of Jordan's overall economic strategy.

Dr. Tarawneh maintained Jordan's appreciation of these countries in helping the Kingdom reschedule its debts.

Jordan's economic stability constitutes a vital factor in ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East, he added.

Dr. Tarawneh had earlier met separately with various ambassadors of the European Union to outline Jordan's domestic and foreign policies.



Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh Wednesday meets with the ambassadors of Japan, Canada, Switzerland, Norway, Australia and South Korea (Petra photo)

According to Dr. Tarawneh, the above-mentioned six countries' economies account for 20 per cent of the overall global economy and their contributions to Jordan's economy account for 40 per cent of the total aid Jordan has received from donor nations.

Additionally, these countries are prominent members of the Paris Club currently rescheduling Jordan's debt burden.

Last week, the Paris Club agreed to reschedule \$400 million of the debt burden, originally to have been paid for by 1999, for

eventual repayment over the next 22 years.

During the Wednesday meeting, Dr. Tarawneh outlined government endeavours to complete the economic restructuring programme, free trade, promote the role of the private sector and increase investment programmes.

The foreign minister also outlined government efforts to transform Amman into a free trade zone — a project, he affirmed, which would enable the city to offer better trade services on a global scale as well as attract investments.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILMS

* "Somos peligrosos" at the Cervantes Institute, Jabal Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
* "New Ways of Seeing: Picasso, Baroque and the Cuban Revolution" (with commentary in Arabic by Adnan al-Sharafi) at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

BAZAAR

* Bazaar (by the United Nations Women's Guild of Jordan) at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday (10:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.). It includes handicraft sales, international cuisine, raffle, and games. (All funds will go for the welfare of women and children in Jordan).

LECTURE

* "The Role of Internet in Education" by Dr. Issa Batarseh at the Fulbright House on Thursday (4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.). (Tel. 684760).

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Guy Férer at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 15.
* Works by Australian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre, until May 30.
* Works by Munir Al-Ubaidi at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Garden Street (Tel. 5536098), until May 31.
* Spring exhibition '97 entitled "Spring is Blooming" at the Jordan River Designs (Tel. 613061/2), until May 31.
* Works by Omar Shawwan at Offical Art Gallery, Um Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until May 29.
* Works by Issam Tintawi at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman, until May 29.

Man receives reduced sentence for premeditated murder of aunt

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Criminal Court last week sentenced a 24-year old man to an imprisonment term of seven and a half years for killing his aunt in December of last year.

Khaled Amin Salman, charged by the prosecutor with the premeditated murder of Layla Suleiman Lafi, 35, had initially received a 15-year sentence, however this was reduced by half as the victim's family dropped charges.

The court tribunal, which adjourned last week in Irbid, decided to amend the premeditated murder charges to manslaughter as, they ruled, the defendant committed the crime in a "fit of fury."

According to court transcripts, the victim was held administratively in Qafqafa prison by Irbid governor 70 days prior to the incident as she apparently had had a child out of wedlock and feared for

her life. On Dec. 12, the court said, Ms. Lafi was released from prison after her family signed a guarantee that they would not harm their daughter and she resided at a relative's house.

One week later, the defendant, who according to court transcripts, was "plotting to kill his aunt," informed the family's attorney that Ms. Lafi's father wished to meet Ms. Lafi at the office in downtown Irbid.

Ms. Lafi then, with her sister Halimeh, arrived to the attorney's office on Al Shahid Street in downtown Irbid, where the defendant was waiting, the transcripts said.

After a short argument, the court said, Mr. Salman drew a gun and shot his aunt three times in the head and chest.

At that time, the attorney grabbed his gun in an attempt to save the woman.

"Halimeh Lafi dragged her bleeding sister to the door in an effort to save

her life, but Mr. Salman followed and shot two more bullets at Layla Lafi and then turned himself to police," the court said.

The court transcripts stated that the victim's sister Halimeh testified in court that "Layla had an illegitimate daughter and repeatedly boasted that she wanted to tarnish her family's honour by getting involved in immoral relationships."

The court dismissed the defence argument that the defendant killed his aunt in order to "cleanse his family's honour."

"This argument is unjustified as the defendant accompanied his aunt upon her release from prison and did not kill her then and therefore cannot benefit from a penalty exemption," the court said.

The verdict, handed down by Justices Mahmoud Bawadi, Khalaf Raqad and Ahmad Khatab, will be automatically reviewed by the Court of Cassation within 30 days.

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Further to the announcement made late last year, the new Andrew Weir, CMA (CMA/CGM Group), Contship, P&O Nedlloyd, SCL (Safmarine and CMBT Lines/Himalaya Express) Consortia is ready to commence service with effect from 1st June 1997, in the Europe-Sub Continent trade.

The Service will operate 7 x 2800 TEU modern containerships providing a fixed day weekly service initially on the following port rotation;

Thamesport, Hamburg, Antwerp, Gioia, Tauro, Port Said, Aqaba, Dubai-Jebel Ali, Karachi, Nhava Sheva, Port Said, Gioia Tauro, Thamesport.

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A spokesman for the consortia commented we are fully satisfied that the Operation has been structured to provide the trade with an unparalleled service quality and reliability, offering a fixed day frequency and fast transit times.

Chirac struggles to rally voters as left scents victory

PARIS (AFP) — President Jacques Chirac struggled Wednesday to save his centre-right coalition from the prospect of a humiliating defeat in run-off ballots this weekend, amid disappointment at a last-ditch television appeal and signs that the Socialist-led opposition scents victory.

As the Paris Bourse slumped in response to the lacklustre television appeal Tuesday night and rumours of polls unpublished in France showing the left ahead, Mr. Chirac warned that success for the left — forcing him to cohabit with a Socialist premier — would seriously weaken France both at home and internationally.

"A change of direction ... would inevitably lead to confusion in our action to build a recovery, and a weakening of our country," he told his ministers at their last cabinet meeting before Sunday's run-off ballots.

"France cannot change direction just like that without taking serious risks," he said, in comments reported by government spokesman Alain Lamassouere.

Mr. Chirac's television

appeal Tuesday night was widely judged disappointing by commentators, who said it was unlikely to inspire a surge for his ruling centre-right coalition.

"Is that all?" said the mass-market France-Soir about Chirac's 10-minute address, in which he said he had "understood the message" of the centre-right's disastrous performance in the first round of polling last Sunday.

Wednesday morning the Paris Bourse CAC-40 index slumped by 4.24 per cent during heavy trading, against a background of rumours that polls showed left-wing parties winning a general election Sunday.

Publication of opinion polls in France is forbidden during the two-round voting period but rumours of polls published abroad, said to indicate that the Socialists, backed by the Communists, would consolidate their first-round lead in the final vote Sunday, sparked heavy selling.

Socialist leader Lionel Jospin meanwhile said Mr. Chirac should already be preparing for "cohabitation" with a left-wing government

— which he would lead himself if the left wins Sunday's second round ballots.

"The election is not yet over. I have a feeling that the French people have begun to make their choice ... they have been given their say and they will decide," he said on French radio.

Mr. Chirac appealed personally to voters Tuesday night, barely 24 hours after the shock announcement that his Premier Alain Juppé will resign next Monday whoever wins the Sunday run-off ballots.

That decision was seen by some as a "panic" reaction to the first-round polls, which have put the Socialist-led left-wing opposition within grasp of a victory.

Mr. Chirac was widely seen as having taken a huge political gamble by dissolving parliament last month and calling elections 10 months ahead of schedule, saying he needed a new mandate to take France into Europe.

The gamble could go disastrously wrong this weekend, as voters go to the polls to elect 577 deputies to the

national assembly, in which Mr. Chirac's centre-right coalition previously held 80 per cent of the seats.

Mr. Juppé's resignation — some say dismissal — was widely seen as a bid to jettison a premier whose personal unpopularity has dogged the centre-right's fortunes.

The Gaullist premier's departure leaves Mr. Chirac in the front line of a poll race in which he, as president, should in theory remain above the fray. His Tuesday television address was seen as a final bid to convince voters, in particular the 32 per cent who abstained in the first round of ballots last weekend.

About the only national daily to give Mr. Chirac's intervention the thumbs-up was the conservative Le Figaro, which said the address made the centre-right bloc "ready for action."

But for others the verdict was a firm thumbs-down. "Chirac: Unable to find an impetus," said the left-of-centre Liberation, referring to the centre-right's fuzzy campaign slogan of "a shared impetus."

Slipping Chretien urges majority Canada mandate

VANCOUVER (R) — Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien, facing slippage in the polls, appealed to voters Tuesday to give him a majority government to let his Liberal government stay the course set over the past 3-1/2 years.

"It's always good to have a strong majority," he told reporters on a campaign stop in this west coast city after new polls suggested the Liberals would win a reduced majority — or even a minority if their support continued to erode.

"Look at what we managed to do in the last term. Having a majority, we had to do tough things that might not have been possible in a minority government."

Mr. Chretien called the June 2 election 1-1/2 years earlier than necessary to capitalise on a commanding lead in the polls.

But a Reuters poll Tuesday conducted by Zogby International from May 24 to 26, showed the Liberals' lead over the Conservatives among decided voters cut to less than 19 points from 31 points at the start of the polls. It showed 40.7 per cent for the Liberals to 18.7 for the Conservatives.

Another survey by Ekos Research Associates put the Liberals below 40 per cent for the first time since the election, at 37.8 per cent,

compared with 21.2 per cent for the Conservatives.

"This could well be a minority with any further erosion," the Ekos pollsters said.

Elected with 177 out of 295 seats in the House of Commons in 1993, Mr. Chretien slashed spending and reduced fiscal deficits, while pushing through social changes such as gun control and homosexual rights.

The budget is not balanced yet, however, and Mr. Chretien faces pressure from the left-wing New Democratic Party (NDP) for new spending and from the Conservative and Reform parties for tax cuts.

The Liberals have tried to craft a message of eventual tax cuts, along with increased spending when the deficit turns to surpluses as the economy grows.

"We have to stay the course and we say that we have to protect the social programmes, medicare, old-age pensions, and so on," he said.

Asked in a television interview Tuesday about tax cuts for small businesses to help job creation, he said: "We have to stay the course. We have to finish to reduce the deficit. Otherwise we will go back to where we were."

If Mr. Chretien's government was reduced to a minority, he would be unlikely

to turn for support to the two largest opposition parties in the last parliament — the separatist Bloc Quebecois and the right-wing Reform Party.

The Bloc Quebecois won 54 Quebec seats in the election, advocating Quebec's separation from Canada.

Reform, dominant in British Columbia and Alberta, won 52 seats, but is reviled by the Liberals for its tough stance on economic issues and hard line on Quebec.

Mr. Chretien would thus face the choice of teaming up with the Liberals' historic rivals, the Conservatives, or with the NDP, which could try to force him into more taxing and spending or more liberal social policies.

The Liberals last formed a minority government under Pierre Trudeau in 1972, relying on NDP support. The Liberals won back a majority in 1974.

The NDP had just nine seats in the last parliament but hopes to win substantially more.

Asked at a televised news conference Tuesday about the possibility of joining with the Liberals, NDP leader Alexa McDonough said: "Let me make it clear, a minority government is not on the ballot. And let me tell you, New Democrats are not going to Ottawa to make deals with anybody."

Antarctic ozone hole decreasing in severity, say meteorologists

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AFP) — The ozone hole over Antarctica is starting to decrease in severity, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) says.

In a report to the Antarctic treaty consultative meeting under way here WMO said, however it may be five years before a "statistically significant trend in the weakening of the ozone hole may emerge."

Ozone, which blocks cancer-causing solar rays, has been depleted by man-made gases and volcanic gases. Three British scientists discovered the formation of the hole over Antarctica in 1985.

WMO said the great destruction of ozone over any region of the world occurs of Antarctica during spring amounting to a "large and rapid depletion" of the ozone layer.

The stratospheric ozone layer represents a layer of pure ozone only about three millimetres thick. It is actually spread through the zone

and is at its greatest concentration near the 17 kilometres above sea level.

In recent years the level of ozone in early October was reduced 70 per cent of average total ozone in years before the discovery of the ozone hole.

WMO said extremely cold temperatures within the polar vortex lead to formation of polar stratospheric clouds (PSCs) over large areas in early winter. The clouds are the key to the severe ozone depletion. The destruction of ozone comes about because of chemical reactions occurring on the surface of ice crystals in PSCs which release reactive chlorine that destroy ozone.

"The chemical reactions are induced by the return of sunlight after the winter polar darkness," WMO said.

WMO said the greatest depth of the ozone hole was recorded in 1993 and the largest area of the hole in 1994 when it was 24 million square kilometres.

The latest hole, that in spring 1996, was distin-

guished by its early development, forming around August last year. It was 22 million square kilometres in area.

"In 1996 the number of days where the ozone hole covered an area of greater than 10 million square kilometres was about 80. This compares with 25 days in 1985."

Balloon flights showed "almost complete" annihilation of ozone between 16 and 22 kilometres.

The lowest October mean total column ozone above the British Antarctic station at Halley Bay occurred in 1993 and they have recorded slight increases in ozone levels in subsequent years.

"It is possible that the ozone hole is starting to decrease in severity on a long term basis," WMO said. "However, it is likely to be five years or more before a statistically significant trend in the weakening of the ozone hole may emerge."

Defence in Oklahoma bomb trial attacks FBI lab

DENVER (R) — Two witnesses in the Oklahoma City bombing case, one of them an FBI agent, Tuesday criticised the way the FBI managed its crime lab, an accusation defence lawyers hope will undermine the case against Timothy McVeigh.

Frederic Whitehurst, an FBI agent and chemist whose complaints sparked an internal investigation into the crime lab, said he found explosives residue contamination at the FBI lab in May 1995, just weeks after the federal building was bombed and 168 people killed.

The defence is expected to wrap up its case this week, possibly as early as Wednesday.

Mr. Whitehurst said the explosives residue, found in four or five spots dotted around the lab, could jeopardise the reliability of the evidence.

"If we're processing evidence and we're contaminating ourselves then you don't know whether our finding of explosive materials on a piece of evidence is a result of our contamination of the evidence ourselves or if the explosive residue was on the evidence before it got to us," he said.

Mr. Whitehurst was a star witness for the defence, which is fighting to dismantle a carefully constructed government case linking Mr. McVeigh to the April 19, 1995, bombing.

The Gulf War veteran, whom the government portrayed as a right-wing fanatic, pleaded not guilty. If convicted he faces the death penalty.

But under cross-examination by prosecutor Beth Wilkinson, Mr. Whitehurst admitted he had no proof the Oklahoma City evidence had become contaminated. "I have no knowledge of any actual contamination of any evidence in this case," he testified.

Later in the day British explosives expert John Lloyd said he saw no evidence that testing for contaminants was conducted on Mr. McVeigh's clothes. He said he disagreed with the FBI conclusion that PETN (pentaerythritol tetranitrate) explosive residue was found on Mr. McVeigh's earplugs.



Hong Kong-based Royal Marines aboard their entire fleet of six Fast Patrol Craft (FPCs) are escorted through Hong Kong waters by a Wessex helicopter during exercises. The event marked the last time the 400 horse-power boats would be seen together before they are to be scrapped in the next few weeks, and the Royal Air Force's Wessex helicopters to be sold to Uruguay. Over the years the craft have been used to stop the flood of illegal immigrants which use fishing boats to sneak into the territory (Reuters photo)

H. Kong's Tung starts consultations on poll plans

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's future leader Tung Chee-hwa has bowed to public pressure and launched informal consultations over a crucial first post-colonial election, a Tung spokesman said Wednesday.

Mr. Tung's office had initially ruled out an opinion-seeking exercise on poll arrangements after China takes over, saying time was too short, but partly relented after a public outcry.

Britain hands Hong Kong back to China next month. It will become a special region of the People's Republic with autonomy that retains capitalism and civil liberties.

Elections are due next year. Pro-democracy activists and Western nations fear a gradual erosion of freedoms under the rule of Beijing which has pledged to preserve Hong Kong's way of life.

"There is not enough time to go through a formal con-

sultation but the public have been invited to submit their views by letter or through the Internet," Mr. Tung spokesman Boh Howlett said. "It was a response to public pressure."

Mr. Tung, who takes over from governor Chris Patten when 156 years of British colonial rule ends at midnight on June 30, has little more than 12 months to draw up a new electoral system for Hong Kong from scratch.

China, piqued at electoral reforms introduced in the twilight of British rule, ordered the entire system scrapped and replaced with new polling laws in time for the first post-colonial elections pencilled in for June 1998.

China's influential preparatory committee, responsible for transforming Hong Kong from a British colony into a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, last month issued a set of guidelines for the future

electoral system. They rule out the British style first-past-the-post voting system in place at present.

In its place, Mr. Tung's future administration has been given the choice between proportional representation and a multiple seat, single vote system and it is these options that Hong Kong people have been asked to evaluate.

A decision is expected by the middle of next month, Mr. Tung's spokesman said.

A spokesman for the outgoing colonial government, which opposes any change in the election system, described the limited pulse-taking exercise as "consultations within a birdcage."

The Democratic Party, which fared the best in the 1995 elections held under the auspices of the British reforms, dismissed the move as nothing more than lip service to the idea of weighing up public opinion. The Hong Kong Standard

described the process as a "whitewash."

"If we are to get the polls off in time the (future) administration will have to work at breakneck speed," it said.

Fresh laws need to be drafted, electoral rolls compiled and constituency boundaries redrawn.

Mr. Tung's office had a point in arguing time was too tight for fully fledged consultations, the standard said. But the English-language daily disputed the worth of an exercise in which Mr. Tung had issued no consultation documents setting out the options available.

"Tung would probably have got away by sticking to his case of a tight schedule and absolutely no time for public consultations," the Standard said.

"Instead, he has opened himself to the accusation that his two-week 'consultation' is no more than a whitewash."

Court decision overshadows Clinton's Europe trip

WASHINGTON (R) — The Supreme Court decision to allow a sexual harassment lawsuit against President Bill Clinton to go ahead immediately cast a pall over what was intended as a week of triumph for the White House.

The signing of an historic security framework for Europe in Paris Tuesday was to have been a focal point for Mr. Clinton, providing a public platform for making NATO expansion the cornerstone of his foreign policy.

Instead the White House found itself on the defensive, responding curtly — or not at all in the president's case — to questions about the political and personal repercussions of the court's unanimous ruling to allow Paula Jones' lawsuit to go ahead now rather than wait until Mr. Clinton leaves office.

Despite celebrations in the Netherlands Wednesday marking the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan, the U.S.-funded programme

that helped rebuild Europe after World War II, Mr. Clinton was certain to be dogged by questions about the case.

Mr. Clinton's private attorney Robert Bennett, calling the allegations "malicious, baseless and politically inspired," said he was "a little surprised" by the court's ruling, but declined to reveal his client's reaction, preferring instead to dwell on the president's European trip.

"The president is very happy and excited about events taking place abroad and that is the focal point of what he is thinking about, not this case," Mr. Bennett said in a CNN interview.

The nation's highest court Tuesday swept aside all legal obstacles Mr. Clinton's lawyers threw in Ms. Jones' path, rejecting arguments that allowing the lawsuit to go forward while he was in office would be a significant distraction, hinder his presidential duties, and invite a deluge of frivolous cases from political oppo-

nents.

In a landmark ruling, all nine justices held for the first time that a lawsuit against a sitting president for conduct unrelated to official duties may proceed to trial. The ruling involved only the timing of the case, not the merits of Ms. Jones' allegations that Mr. Clinton made unwanted advances in 1991 in a Little Rock hotel room when he was governor of Arkansas and she was a state employee.

She claimed Mr. Clinton had her summoned during a government conference and, when they were alone, made crude sexual advances. Mr. Clinton denied the allegations.

The case was sent back to an Arkansas court, where it was filed in 1994, for more hearings. But it could be delayed by new motions by Mr. Clinton's lawyers seeking to dismiss the suit.

Even so, Gil Davis, one of Ms. Jones' attorneys, predicted a trial would start "within a year." U.S. District Court Judge Susan

Webber Wright, who is handling the case, said Tuesday she would decide on a trial date within two months. Typically it would be set 10-12 months in advance.

Ms. Jones welcomed the court's decision, declaring that she was looking forward to her "day in court."

Although Mr. Bennett was sceptical about an out-of-court agreement, another of Ms. Jones' lawyers laid out what he called "the bare minimum" required to settle the case.

"Our mandate from Paula Jones is quite clear," Joseph Cammarata said in an interview on cable television's MSNBC.

"She wants her good name and reputation restored. If there's some way to accomplish that through some statement the president may read or issue that says he remembers her, that she was in that room, that she did nothing wrong and that she is a good person, well that may be sufficient," he said.

U.S. raising pressure for IRA ceasefire — paper

LONDON (R) — The United States is discreetly stepping up pressure on the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to declare a ceasefire as part of a renewed diplomatic offensive over Northern Ireland, the Financial Times reported Wednesday.

Senior officials of the U.S. National Security Council who advise President Bill Clinton on Northern Ireland had telephoned leaders of the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein to build on what Washington believed was the new prospect for peace after the Labour Party's victory in the May 1 British general election, the Financial Times said.

"It is thought that additional contacts are being pursued through other U.S. officials," the newspaper added. It gave no source for its information.

The Financial Times said the fresh U.S. involvement

followed more than a year during which the Clinton administration had distanced itself from Northern Ireland politics because of the IRA's continuing military campaign and the absence of any workable peace formula coming from London and Dublin.

It quoted an unidentified Irish official as saying: "Clinton is clearly once again interested in helping strike a deal over Northern Ireland and we welcome that."

The IRA has so far rejected international pleas to end a 28-year war aimed at ending British rule in Northern Ireland and uniting the province with neighbouring Ireland.

But a lull in IRA hostilities has helped to create a climate for Britain to end a ban on talks with Sinn Fein at officials' level while still ruling out ministerial meet-

ings. Political sources in Belfast said Sinn Fein would hold another round of talks with British officials Wednesday to try to breathe new life into the Northern Ireland peace process.

The talks, the second in a week since Britain relaxed its ban on contacts with Sinn Fein, come on the eve of a Dublin meeting between Britain's new Northern Ireland Secretary Mo Mowlam and Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring.

British and Sinn Fein officials said after their first meeting in 16 months last Wednesday that it was too soon to say whether prospects had improved for an early IRA ceasefire. But Sinn Fein said a start had been made on dealing with problems.

Northern Ireland has been tense for months after a resurgence in IRA guerrilla

warfare and violence by pro-British loyalist groups. Many people fear mid-year protestant parades could spark serious street riots.

Mr. Mowlam is due to meet heads of Protestant groups whose annual parades inflame sectarian tension, according to Irish Roman Catholics.

Britain and Ireland hope talks involving most Northern Ireland parties will rekindle the peace drive. The talks, chaired by former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, have been riven by inter-party wrangling. Adjourned in March, they are due to restart in Belfast on June 3.

Irish Republicans say the IRA will not call a fresh truce until Britain guarantees that Sinn Fein will get a place at the talks. Sinn Fein is barred because of IRA violence.



Rail cars lay on their sides after being turned over by a tornado in Texas. At least 32 people were killed when a string of powerful tornadoes and thunderstorms ripped through central Texas tossing vehicles into the air and destroying businesses and homes by the dozen (Reuter photo)

Texas Tornadoes kill 32, wreck dozens of homes

JARRELL, Texas (R) — At least 32 people were killed when a string of powerful tornadoes and thunderstorms ripped through central Texas, tossing vehicles into the air like toys and destroying businesses and homes by the dozen.

Police said the deadliest tornado killed at least 30 people when it obliterated homes in the small Williamson County town of Jarrell, about 60 kilometres north of Austin. Stunned rescue teams said the death toll could rise higher during the night.

"It is total chaos. We'll be searching all night long for more," Sheriff Ed Richards said. "There is debris everywhere."

Rescue workers tried to find victims and survivors in the rubble of at least 50 homes and trailer homes flattened when the tornado, which was at least 200 yards wide, roared through at about 3:45 p.m. (2045 GMT).

Dozens of cars and trucks were torn into bits, their twisted parts lying in ditches, on open ground or entangled in the wreckage of nearby homes. One truck was hurled northward, its lights still on. It was not clear whether the driver was still inside.

At least six tornadoes, accompanied by baseball-sized hail and torrential rain, were reported across four counties and two people were killed in the state capital of Austin. A girl drowned in a flooded creek and a man was killed when a building collapsed.

In Jarrell, hearses began to line up outside a makeshift morgue at the small town's volunteer firehouse as rescue teams scoured the area for more bodies and possible survivors. Those that escaped the tornado but lost their homes gathered in huddled groups at a nearby high school, where they ate pizza and swapped their horror stories.

Kay Tucker, a retired widow, said she escaped possible death by a matter of minutes as she returned home from an appointment with her dentist. "There's nothing left to see," she said of her brick ranch-style house, one of the sturdiest in the rural community. "One of my neighbour's 16-wheel trucks is

upside down on my property." Others recalled how they warned their family members to flee from the oncoming storm. "I've seen the tornado on TV and I called my wife and daughters and told them to get in their cars and run," said Al Clawson, the owner of a nearby garbage recycling plant which was wrecked. At least two of the plant's trucks lay on their sides after being tossed into the air.

Jarrell, a town of about 1,000 people, suffered heavy damage in another tornado eight years ago but residents said that did not compare to Tuesday's devastation. "I've been through two tornadoes and this was worse than anything I've ever seen," Sheriff Richards said.

Television pictures showed the huge twister kicking up debris along interstate 35, the main highway running north-south through Texas and officials said it stopped all southbound traffic for a while. A separate tornado ripped the roof off a grocery store at Cedar Park, just north of

Austin. Police said one store worker was dragged out and taken to a hospital in critical condition, several more were injured and at least one person was believed missing.

They brought in search dogs to help look for survivors but the search was hindered by fears that parts of the store might collapse. A shopping mall and a housing development in the area were also struck. "There is some pretty widespread devastation," Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) spokesman Mike Cox said.

About 30 kilometres further north of Jarrell, another tornado touched down on the edge of Lake Belton, destroying a city-owned marina and a half-dozen boats at Morgan's Point resort.

Several homes were wrecked in the area. "It has been a very busy afternoon," said John Durham, the coordinator of Emergency Management Services in Bell County. The storms cut electricity supplies to about 50,000 homes across the four counties hardest hit, officials said.

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Afghan Taliban suffer defeat in opposition stronghold

MAZAR-I-SHARIF, Afghanistan (AFP) — The Taliban militia Wednesday retreated from the northern Afghanistan capital of Mazar-i-Sharif after their enemies-turned-allies switched sides again.

The Islamic warriors, who control more than 80 per cent of Afghanistan, withdrew after several hours of bitter clashes with the Shiite Muslim Hezb-i-Wahdat militia and the forces of a commander who originally invited them into the city.

One witness reported seeing the bodies of around 20 Taliban soldiers in the streets. He said he had seen supporters of General Abdul Malik shoot dead two Taliban fighters execution-style.

United Nations agencies based in Islamabad turned down requests from foreigners in Mazar-i-Sharif to organise special airlifts to evacuate foreigners, sources in the Pakistani capital said.

The sources said the U.N. agencies were not operating flights because of "security risks."

The Taliban entered Mazar-i-Sharif, former headquarters of ethnic Uzbek warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum, last Saturday in what was seen as a major break-

through in its attempt to take control of the whole of Afghanistan.

Gen. Malik turned against Dostum last week, took Mazar-i-Sharif and then sought an alliance with the Taliban. Gen. Dostum fled to Turkey and ex-President Burhanuddin Rabbani was said to have gone to neighbouring Tajikistan.

Clashes broke out Tuesday night after a meeting between Gen. Malik and Taliban foreign minister, Mullah Mohammad Ghous, who had come especially from Kabul.

After a night of street battles, intense artillery, mortar and rocket fire took a grip on the city Wednesday which came to an abrupt halt around midday. Residents and rival fighters reported that most of the Islamic militia had pulled out.

There were also unconfirmed reports that the Taliban had suffered very heavy casualties.

Residents said small groups of Taliban were still in Mazar-i-Sharif but that Gen. Malik's soldiers were patrolling the streets.

Violence started Tuesday as the Taliban tried to seize the weapons of rival groups. Tension worsened after the

Taliban tried to enter the Shiite district of Sayyad Al Abbad with armoured vehicles in an attempt to disarm suspected Hezb members.

The Taliban foreign minister said 10,500 troops had been sent to northern Afghanistan in an effort to take the provinces not under Taliban control.

Before Wednesday's clashes, the Taliban had been negotiating with Hezb-i-Wahdat for a peaceful takeover of the central province of Bamian.

Key opposition commander Ahmad Shah Masood has also spoken with the Taliban's defence minister for the first time, a Taliban official said in the fundamentalist militia's headquarters in Kandahar.

Mr. Masood, who controls the other two provinces not in Taliban hands, spoke with Mulla Obaidullah by satellite telephone Tuesday, said the spokesman Mullah Wakil Ahmad.

No details on the talks were given, but the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) quoted Mr. Ahmad as saying Mr. Masood wanted to hold peace talks.

The United Arab Emirates Tuesday became the third country, after Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, to recognise

the Taliban as the legal government of Afghanistan. All gave their recognition following the Taliban advance into the north of the country.

But many neighbours remain worried about the hardline Islamic policies of the Taliban who have been in Kabul since last September.

The Taliban Foreign Ministry Tuesday made an appeal for the United Nations and other organisations and countries to recognise its administration.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan is to tour Central Asian neighbours of Afghanistan in an attempt to allay fears about the Taliban.

But Russia has said it is "seriously concerned" by the potential threat to the borders of its southern allies — Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — posed by the Taliban.

And in New Delhi, former Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee warned Wednesday that the Taliban's control of Afghanistan would lead to more violence in Kashmir, where a Muslim separatist rebellion has cost 20,000 lives since 1989.

Japanese parents gripped with fear after boy's head chopped off

TOKYO (AFP) — Scared parents in Kobe herded children to school Wednesday in groups of five or six after fear gripped the western city over the killing of an 11-year-old boy whose severed head was found at a school gate.

Parents closely watched their offspring a day after the head of Jun Hase was placed in front of a junior high school in the area already terrorised after attacks on two schoolgirls.

Parents and teachers shepherded children to school in groups of five or six to reduce the risk of another attack. "It is really distressing," one mother who accompanied a group of children to school told Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK).

"This area used to be such a good environment for children. We had nothing to worry about. But now this thing happened, and I can't bear it," she said.

A 41-year-old father of two elementary school children told Jiji Press: "We were greatly shocked. We can't let children go and play by themselves."

Jun, the second son of medical doctor Mamoru Hase, had been missing since Saturday afternoon when he left his home to visit his grandfather nearby, according to police.

Following the discovery of the severed head by the school caretaker, a headless body was found in a massive search on a hill near Jun's elementary school, and was later identified as being that of the boy.

A police spokesman said two pieces of paper had been found in the boy's mouth. One of them openly challenged police, saying "can you stop me?"

The other was written in red letters and was almost incoherent, carrying six Chinese characters, including "Devil," and "Rose."

Jun's mouth was ripped both sides with the messages dangling from each side, several news reports said. An autopsy revealed that the killer strangled to death Hase, a retarded boy, Sunday night.

Police mobilised 430 officers Wednesday to search around the site, including the junior high school and the hill, and question residents.

Sri Lankan Navy reports 50 rebels killed in sea battle

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan Navy patrols chased and sank at least seven Tamil rebel boats off the northeastern coast early Wednesday, killing an estimated 50 guerrillas, military officials said.

The six-hour battle began Tuesday when a flotilla of Navy Dvora fast attack craft detected and engaged three groups of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebel boats off Kok-kilal, 260 kilometres east of Colombo, they said.

"Our Dvora destroyed one group of boats with at least four boats," one official said. "We believe at least 50 terrorists would have been killed in the battle."

Reinforcement navy attack craft rushed from the eastern base at Trincomalee destroyed three more boats of the rebels' Sea Tiger naval wing, he said.

Two weeks ago, the Sri Lankan military launched a fresh offensive against the LTTE, who are fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the mainly Sinhalese Indian Ocean island's north and east.

Troops, backed by tanks, artillery and aircraft, were reported to be advancing slowly into the northern rebel-held Wanni region after facing fierce resistance earlier.

Two army divisions, consisting of some 20,000 troops, launched "Opera-

tion Jaya Sikuru," or "Sure Of Victory," from Vavuniya 220 kilometres north of Colombo, on May 13 in a bid to open a supply route to the Jaffna Peninsula, 100 kilometres further north.

The military now relies on costly air and sea supply lines to maintain bases in Jaffna because the Tigers hold much of the terrain between Jaffna and Vavuniya.

One division thrust north from Vavuniya and captured the towns of Omanthai and Ramhaikulam, 17 kilometres north of Vavuniya.

The other, made up of elite air mobile and commando units, broke out from the northeastern Weli Oya base and seized the town of Nedunkeli, 25 kilometres northeast of Vavuniya.

The Defence Ministry said at least 89 soldiers had been killed and about 145 wounded in the offensive, one of the military's biggest since the war began in 1983.

Hospital sources said about 600 soldiers had been wounded.

The military says more than 200 rebels have been killed. The LTTE have accused the military of killing Tamil civilians and destroying their property under the pretext of opening the supply route.

The government says more than 50,000 people

have been killed in the war. The rebels say the toll is higher.

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan police are recruiting more women to the force, freeing the men to serve in the island's war-ravaged north and east, police said Wednesday.

"Frankly, there are not enough men today," Senior Superintendent Lalith Gunasekera of the police training school told Reuters.

"More and more women, meanwhile, are willing to come forward and take on the responsibility of being a policewoman."

The training school at Kalutara, 40 kilometres south of the capital Colombo, had so far this year graduated 456 women, while another 535 are waiting in the wings to be inducted as sub-inspectors and constables, he said.

"This is the highest number of women to have been trained by us in one year in the history of the force," said a senior official attached to the police recruitment and training division.

"Part of the fallout from this development is that the police can now release more men to serve in the north and the east in a supportive role to the army," said the official, who declined to be identified.

"We release policewomen also to serve in the north and the east and so far they have fared extremely well," Mr. Gunasekera said.

Indonesia on security alert ahead of election

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia declared a nationwide security alert to prevent unrest in Thursday's general election which comes after a campaign overshadowed by dozens of deaths, police said.

"The alert has been ordered for all of Indonesia's provinces. This is a security level where the forces are on standby at their respective posts," Colonel Bambang Haryoto of the national police told AFP Wednesday. "We have done this so that the voters feel secure, and also in anticipation of possible problems." Jakarta military commander Major General Sutiyoso said 25,000 security personnel would be deployed in the capital, which has also been hit by mass rioting during the campaign, the Media Indonesia daily reported.

The 27-day campaign, which ended Friday, was marred by daily violence.

Around 260 people were killed, including around 123 in the South Kalimantan capital of Banjarmasin after riots.

There were several riots in Central Java province before the start of campaigning, mostly between rival supporters of the Muslim-led United Development Party (PPP) and the ruling Golkar Party.

Mr. Megawati, the daughter of Indonesia's founding President Sukarno, has been replaced as PDI leader by the government-installed Suryadi. Analysts say the election campaign has been the most violent since President Suharto came to power in 1966.

The Banjarmasin riots erupted following clashes between PPP and Golkar supporters. Angry mobs attacked or burned hundreds of buildings, including shopping centres, hotels, banks, churches and government buildings, and more than 100 vehicles.

Of the 181 people arrested in connection with the riots, around 100 are still being detained.

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Burma military blocks access to Suu Kyi home

RANGOON (R) — Security blocks remained around the home of Burmese democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi to stop her party gathering to mark the anniversary of its unrecognized 1990 election win, the military government said Wednesday.

"The order that only certain people can enter Suu Kyi's house remains in place and we don't think the NLD members will attempt to hold any gatherings," a government spokesman told Reuters.

Thwarted on the first day of its planned two-day meeting Tuesday, the National League for Democracy (NLD) slammed the Ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) for its blockade.

"Although the SLORC has said it will build the nation under a democratic system, their actions are contrary to building democracy," the party said in a statement. SLORC, using armed riot police, Tuesday cut off access to the lakeside home of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize laureate and other possible locations for the meeting.

Only 10 Executive Committee members of the party were allowed into Ms. Suu Kyi's house.

The NLD had hoped to bring together several hundred party members and elected parliamentarians to mark the seventh anniversary of its landslide election victory, which was not recognised by SLORC.

"The situation is calm and we don't think anything untoward will happen," the government spokesman said Wednesday. He said security blocks would remain around Ms. Suu Kyi's house and that checks would be made on those going in.

Senior NLD officials and Ms. Suu Kyi's house could not be reached by phone because the lines had been cut by authorities.

The NLD says SLORC has detained up to 316 party members, including about 50 members of parliament, nationwide to stop the gathering from taking place. There was no word Wednesday of whether any had been released.

SLORC denies charges it has detained party members and has asked the NLD to prove its claims.

The United Nations' special investigator for human rights in Burma Tuesday called for the immediate release of NLD members and asked Rangoon to explain the legal basis of the detentions.

In a letter to Foreign Minister Ohn Gyaw, special rapporteur Rajsmoor Lallah and the head of a U.N. experts working group on arbitrary detention urged the government to "do its utmost to ensure the right to physical and mental integrity of the detained NLD members and to consider their immediate release."

Diplomats and U.N. sources say Rangoon's record of cooperation with the world body on human rights issues is mixed at best. It has not allowed the special rapporteur for human rights in Burma to visit the country since 1995.

U.N. population report says 83 million pregnancies a year are unwanted

PARIS (AFP) — About 83 million pregnancies each year are unwanted, a U.N. population report said Wednesday, blaming cultural, family and political factors for impeding family planning, particularly in developing countries.

In its report for 1997, the U.N. Population Fund (UNPF) recalled that on the occasion of the 1995 U.N. Conference on Women in Beijing, governments pledged to respect the fundamental rights of women regarding health and sex and notably their "right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence."

In reality, the report said these rights were being violated on a daily basis because of the absence of any "right to choose" and by the

lack of suitable health care.

As a result of this "denial of rights," the UNPF said that "more than 585,000 women die each year from causes related to pregnancy" — that is one death a minute. The overwhelming majority of these deaths occurred in the developing countries, it said.

The UNPF estimated that between 120 and 150 million women would like to limit or space out their pregnancies but were prevented from doing so. It said 350,000 million couples had no information about or no access to contraception.

Among about 200 million pregnancies recorded annually in the world, at least 83 million were undesired. The result was 50 million abortions, half of them carried out in conditions which endangered the health or life of the woman, the UNPF said.

"An African woman is 500 times more likely to die of pregnancy-related causes than her counterpart in one of the Scandinavian countries," the report said.

Efforts to prevent sexually-transmitted diseases (STD), particularly prevalent in women, ran into similar hurdles because of ignorance and the reluctance on the part of many men to use condoms, the report said.

There are an estimated 333 million new cases of STDs every year. Worldwide, the disease burden of STDs in women is more than five times that of men. STDs cause the second highest burden of disease for women aged 15-44 in developing countries after maternal mortality and morbidity, the report said, adding that when AIDS was included, STDs "account for nearly 15 per cent of all health lost to people in this key production age range."

Jordan Times

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PNA took right move

THE PALESTINIAN authorities did the right thing, albeit belatedly, when they freed journalist Daoud Kuttub Tuesday after holding him without charges for a week. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) did the wrong thing, however, when it ordered the arrest and detention of the journalist in the first place because he had broadcast the Legislative Council's sessions live. The fact that the PNA did not press charges against Mr. Kuttub during his detention reinforces the conviction that the journalist did nothing wrong by giving the Palestinian people access to the deliberations of their "parliament."

It was not only political issues that were aired and transmitted out in public on which Palestinians may legitimately disagree. They were also exposed to the extent of corruption that was unveiled in recent times. A Palestinian auditing office has recently disclosed that no less than \$326 million were squandered by Palestinian officials, including ministers, during the past year alone. Palestinian people of all walks of life and irrespective of their political persuasions are united against corruption and embezzlements in their midst. Mr. Kuttub and like-minded journalists have all the right to use their freedom to print and broadcast all information regarding the deliberations of the Palestinian representatives. After all those representatives are conducting their business on behalf of the people.

Any system of government that denies the public the right to know what goes in their parliament is not a fair system.

Furthermore, Mr. Kuttub has been a tough and courageous campaigner for Palestinian rights. Over the years he made his voice loud and clear in the U.S., Europe and elsewhere against Israeli occupation and violation of his people's right. His credentials are, therefore, beyond reproach.

True the Palestinian authorities have yet to develop a sophisticated set of laws and regulations to govern the affairs of their future state and its subjects. Still they are duty bound to demonstrate their full commitment to democracy and pluralism since it is only through these instruments that the Palestinian people would have a voice in the difficult decisions that need to be taken in the months and years ahead.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily Wednesday floated the idea of a nuclear reactor in Jordan as sufficient to take care of many of the country's problems. In view of the fact that Jordan is in growing need of water whose sources are being depleted, the Kingdom had earlier turned its attention to the prospect of constructing the Red Sea-Dead Sea canal which can provide cheap electricity that can desalinate sea water, said Fahed Fakel. But, he said, since the project is almost impossible to carry out due to its astronomical cost, which reaches \$4 billion, and in view of the fact that neither Israel nor the Palestinian National Authority are expected to participate in the scheme, the only alternative for the Kingdom is a nuclear reactor. He said that such a reactor can provide Jordan with relatively cheap desalinated water for domestic, agricultural and industrial purposes and relatively cheap energy which Jordan is currently importing from abroad. The writer said that the U.S. presented Egypt with a nuclear reactor, as a gift for signing the Camp David accords, and Jordan should demand a similar favour for concluding the peace treaty with Israel and acquire a reactor which could be used for peaceful purposes. He said with a nuclear reactor, which can be funded by the World Bank and donor nations, Jordan can meet most of its present and future needs for water and electricity.

A WRITER for the weekly Al Majd said the Arabs can counter the Israeli-Turkish alliance and end the two countries' ongoing aggression on Arab lands by resorting to solidarity and joint planned action. Fahed Rimawi said the time has come for the Arabs to shelve the so-called peace process after they have discovered the prevarications of the Israeli government and its disregard to the meaning of peace, the writer suggested that the Palestinians return to suicidal attacks on Israeli targets to further promote their cause and to prove to the Israeli public that Netanyahu's policies can by no means protect continued occupation of Arab lands. At the same time, Damascus and Baghdad should be united by dead rather than word, and give impetus to the pan-Arab nationalist movement for the defence of the Arab homeland. Once a Syrian-Iraqi alliance has been formed, Turkey will find itself isolated and weak and once Tehran has joined in, Ankara will definitely re-examine its position and its unholy alliance with Tel Aviv, the writer continued. He said Turkey is internally divided and its identity is unclear — oriented or occidental — Islamic or secular, dictatorial or democratic, and unable to protect its national unity, with the Kurds continually struggling for freedom. The writer said with a Syrian-Iraqi alliance emerging, Turkey's present aggressive stand will definitely collapse.

The View from Academia

Education and the need to think economically

THE LAST two decades of the twentieth century will go down in history as marking fundamental changes — the fall of the Soviet empire, the launching of Mideast peace, globalisation, the communication and information revolution, etc. — at a variety of levels: political, social, technological and economic.

Economically, the changes have been tremendous. Economic thought is, of course, as old as humanity itself. It is indeed interesting, and instructive, to note that the first chapter of Henry David Thoreau's "Walden" — a book which aims to take man back to the life of simplicity which once was — is entitled "Economy," the idea being that man cannot live life effectively without having to come to terms with its basic economics first. Recently, we have been hearing, thinking and speaking economically in relation to almost everything in our own lives.

This is especially true in connection with education. There is a great deal of emphasis now on effective management of resources. Whether in the private or public sectors, school, as well as college education, is seen as costly, and it indeed is. There is dire need therefore to spend the limited resources wisely and in accordance with well thought-out planning.

There is also a widespread perception (which may not be entirely correct) that the more you spend on education (wisely and tactfully, that is), the more benefits you receive — hence the shift toward privatisation, the private sector being seen as either having more money or being able to raise more money, not to mention the fact that it generally manages money more efficiently.

There are also, in this same context, those who have

been tying the fate and shape of academic programmes and disciplines to employability and the needs of the market. Disciplines whose graduates do not find employment upon graduation ought either to be totally cancelled or drastically reduced. Why spend money on disciplines which are not financially rewarding either to students or to society? Similarly, economics and investment also encompass the time factor. Why spend five years training a student in a certain discipline when he/she can be more effectively trained in two or three? Pharmacy is a classic example. Do you need to spend five years of expensive college education to train someone to dispense and sell medicine in a pharmacy when all you need are two to three years of efficient training?

The relation between economics and education or investment and education is quite rich and complex, and the economic view of man is affecting our lives in ways which we may not be totally aware of — drastic and crucial.

What I wish to emphasise, however, are the following points:

— When one talks about economics of education or investment in education, one is essentially borrowing a metaphor from the economic or business world to apply to education, and the metaphor is applicable in nearly all its aspects and components: i.e. human capital, human product, quality, marketability, cost and benefit, investors, etc. I believe that, despite some reservations about it, it is a metaphor that works. It may be somewhat reductive and pejorative to think of human beings as "capital" and "product," but the truth of the matter is that

money affects education tremendously and we have much to learn from the business world whose control and management of resources and products can teach us a lot as to how we ought to conduct business in the world of education. There is a great deal of mismanagement and bad spending when it comes to education in our part of the world, and we may learn something valuable from the business and economic concepts.

— We, educators and teachers, complain a lot about our students' noticeable lack of motivation to learn and our students' lack of enthusiasm for making progress. We find it extremely difficult to influence our students at the affective level — the level of attitude, values and motives. Suppose we get it into their heads (somehow) that they are their parents' investment and their society's product — i.e., suppose we get them to think economically — would they not be more enthusiastic to learn?

Well, the answer may not be a straightforward yes, but the experiment is worth trying. When our students get it into their heads that they are spending their parents' (poor or rich) and society's (poor or rich) valuable funds (poor or rich) and that they are taking their education more seriously so that such funds do not go to waste? No matter what, people value money — their money, that is.

— Suppose we make teachers think of themselves as company personnel, parents as investors or shareholders and teaching institutions (schools and universities) as business ventures; would not the human product be categorically different and better than it is at this point?

This concept should be given a chance.

Jordan's democratic image abroad — paramount for countering sensationalist news

By Lu'ay Minwer Al Rimawi

ONE CAN proudly argue that Jordan's growing favourable regional and international reputation is largely attributed to its oascent pluralistic political system. Such a democratic image is genuinely taking roots in the West and according Jordan with well-deserved international acclaim.

It is no exaggeration to say that Jordan's democratic credentials are acknowledged and lauded by many international political commentators. Moreover, given the Kingdom's ever-improving macroeconomics conditions and the newly enacted private laws, Jordan can

only expect to solidify its positive image abroad.

Indeed, unlike many regional states, Jordan is no longer seen as an inane police-run state, which is incapable of producing earnest intellectual arguments with which to support its domestic actions. In the context of modern political discourse, it is the unreasonable who can fail to observe Jordan's serious interest in human rights and public commitments to further political liberalisation.

However, recent apparent retreats from our Jordanian progressive stance, together with unjustifiable heavy-handedness against peaceful journalists, makes Amman no more dissimilar to many regional capitals.

Indeed, a major challenge that Jordan faces today is how to entrench itself as a legal civilised society, on par with the civilised world.

For, a civil society (the cornerstone of the modern state) is one which is governed by constitutionality and the rule of law. Force and draconian measures are the hallmarks of an underdeveloped, pre-modern society which is incapable of producing mature political compromises.

The Jordanian society of today is a considerably more sophisticated society. It is a society which is amenable to rational arguments and justifications. No reasonable Jordanian can speak in defence of the domestic irresponsible,

sensationalist journalism. Yet the government's overweening attitude ignores Jordan's confident march towards political pluralism. Moreover, it is counterproductive to undermine the Constitution by enacting laws which bypass constitutional propriety. Neither is it becoming for a responsible government to (intentionally or unintentionally) undermine the nation's belief in the sanctity of the Constitution.

Democracy is not only about speeches, slogans or public lectures; it is also about institutions and popular practices which are imbued with legality and proper procedures. A democratic Jordan, in a region drenched with authoritarianism, is an

asset which we all should cherish and never relinquish. A dichotomous relationship between citizens and government, where both nestle themselves in inevitable positions, is often harmful. For, on many occasions, the truth is somewhere in between.

However, we in Jordan must not dramatise what is deemed as part and parcel of the paraphernalia of modernism. The complexity of modern society accepts that conflict inevitably arises between governments and citizens. That is why these advanced societies have devised domestic legal mechanisms in order to dispel the clouds of confusion. Needless to mention, it was not long ago when England

faced similar problems with its press, which is self-disciplined. Yet, what is at stake for Jordan at this juncture is whether or not its citizens and government are prepared to throw away its growing democratic image abroad. (Though, an honest image is the one which is always a reflection of palpable substance). Such a question is paramount, given the international press' unquenchable thirst for sensationalising Middle Eastern news.

The writer is doctoral law researcher at the London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Iran, women and the revolution

By Gwynne Dyer

AYATOLLAH MOHAMMAD Khatami, the surprise victor in the Iranian presidential election last week, owes a lot to women. Teenagers (Iranians can vote at 15), intellectuals and even left-wing Muslim radicals, all contributed to his landslide win, too, but without the women's vote he would have barely scraped through. With it, he won an astounding 69 per cent — over two-thirds — of the votes cast.

We will not know for certain until he takes over from outgoing President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in August, but there is speculation that Khatami may even nominate Rafsanjani's daughter Faiza as his vice-president. The two men are political allies (Rafsanjani was constitutionally forbidden to stand for a third term), and Faiza is a political power in her own right.

In appearance she conforms entirely to the revolution's image of an Iranian woman. She wears no cosmetics and always appears shrouded in a black chador (though she was the only woman candidate in last year's parli-

amentary election to show her chin in her election posters). But in that election she won the second-highest number of votes in all Iran.

Faiza Hashemi Rafsanjani, 33, does not waste time arguing with anti-picking mullahs about the finer points of women's fashions: her only known view on the topic is that women should be allowed to wear a wider range of colours than black, brown, grey and blue. But on women's role in Iranian politics she holds nothing back.

"One of the problems of women in Iran is that they are not present in high levels of government or decision-making at the macro level," she told the women's magazine "Zanan" (woman) shortly after being elected to the Iranian parliament last year. "Women should now be getting to the higher levels, including the executive level, the presidency. There is no religious bar to this, for Islam only says women cannot be judges."

That is a matter of interpretation. Hassan Gani, secretary of the Council of Guardians that vets all candidates for the Iranian presidency, recently stated his

view that Islam does bar women from running for presidential office. (The council rejected all nine women who sought to run). But Iran is a democracy, if a strange and rather limited one, and even the most conservative mullahs cannot ignore who elected Khatami to the presidency.

The numbers tell the story. Just one month before the election, on May 23, the "Tehran Times" published an opinion poll predicting that the conservative candidate, parliamentary speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri would win over 40 per cent of the votes. Khatami would get only 33 per cent, with the rest of the vote divided between minor candidates and "don't knows".

It was a quite respectable poll based on the responses of over a thousand residents of Tehran, a city where Khatami was expected to do better than elsewhere. Yet it underestimated his support by more than half: he got 69 per cent of the vote, not 33 per cent. So, did everybody change their minds in one month?

Of course not. It is just that an Iranian woman can get into a lot of trouble for talking to strangers, so

Iranian opinion polls, whether conducted in the streets or by knocking on doors, are bound to miss most of the female voters. But in the polling booths, they were there in their millions: the turn-out was 88 per cent.

So what can Khatami do with this resounding victory, with or without a female vice-president?

Khatami is not a "liberal", a label even more despised in Iran than it is in America; he is a Shiite Muslim cleric. And he has no intention of spending his limited political capital in trying to change Iran's terrible relationship with the United States. "The two states are obsessed with each other: irrational, neurotic, hyperbolic," said a Tehran-based diplomat from a U.S.-ally country.

It is certainly true of Washington, where House Speaker Newt Gingrich describes Iran as "the most dangerous nation on earth... a permanent, long-term threat to civilised life on this planet." and the Clinton administration imposes Cuban-style trade sanctions. It is just as true in Iran, where otherwise sane people talk of the "Great Satan" without bat-

ting an eye.

In foreign policy, Khatami is hemmed in by the enmity of the United States and the paranoia of Iran's own revolutionary ideology, though he tells voters that Iran must stop "adoring on hating the West, and develop a more balanced attitude". And on economic and trade issues, he has equally little room for manoeuvre.

Rafsanjani leaves Khatami an economy where debt and inflation are more under control, but it is still a nightmare. Iran's population has literally doubled to 69 million since the 1979 revolution, and economic growth has not remotely kept up.

The true unemployment figure may be as high as 30 per cent, and another 30 per cent are seriously under-employed by world standards. Yet, the bazaar merchants and impoverished clerics who became the revolution's elite are its chief economic beneficiaries as well, so they will not permit major economic reforms.

What's left for Khatami is the political and social field — and it is because they believed that he would start opening Iran up in these areas that the women,

the young people and everybody else interested in change voted for him. He spoke last year of the need for "freedom of thought and the assurance of being able to express oneself in all security." Can he deliver?

In Iran, people tend to think in symbolic terms. Will he relegalise satellite dishes? Will he liberalise women's dress codes? But that matters a lot less than whether he will push Iran down the road towards a more tolerant future — one where women and other human beings without beards and turbans also have a say in the way their country is run, and in the circumstances of their own lives.

Rafsanjani wanted the same things, and was stymied by the conservative clergy for eight years. But Khatami is starting down the same road when his opponents are more tired and less popular — and he does have that amazing vote behind him. Of all living Iranians over the age of 15, six out of ten actually got up, left the house, went to a polling booth, and put an 'X' by his name.

LETTERS

Assuming responsibility is healthy

To the Editor:

THE ISSUE raised by the family of the late Dr. Tawfiq Karadsheh in the letter "Better medical care for better Jordan" (Jordan Times, May 26, 1997), concerning accountability by the medical profession for its negligence, should be taken very seriously.

The victim this time is a doctor who served for many years at the Ministry of Health. Yet his family seems to be in a dilemma as to who it should turn to for investigation into the case.

Stories of complaints on medical and hospital care

are endless. Yet nothing is being done to correct matters.

In my opinion, it is because we always depended on medical boards to investigate negligence. Doctors have no interest to implement a tough code of practice or to impose penalties to which they might be subjected, perhaps, one day. Legalisation protecting the obligation to ethics by doctors should be imposed on the medical field by people outside the profession.

The medical profession in Jordan is turning into a big industry and a foreign currency earner. We should not allow malpractices, rivalry, egotistical competitive

behaviours, negligence and poor hospital management, of a minority, to ruin its reputation.

Samir Khalil Maqdeh, Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

Society on the Move

The irony in revolving doors

Reports of changes in the Office of Crown Prince Hassan have been confirmed by an official source. Michel Hamarneh, who has been director of the Office of the Crown Prince since 1988 and holds the rank of minister, will join the class of the valued and trusted individuals who are advisors to the Crown Prince. Taking on the directorship is Hosam Abu Ghazaleh, Jordan's ambassador in Vienna, former Royal Jordanian president and senior air force officer. Prior to his appointment as envoy to Austria, Mr. Abu Ghazaleh served as the director of the office of the prime minister under HRH Zeid Bin Shaker. Other changes, details of which could not be confirmed, are expected to be announced Saturday. These may extend beyond the Royal Court.

STEP RIGHT UP FOLKS: Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs Jawad Anani, Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf, and Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister Bassim Awadallah head to the U.S. on Saturday for a road show. No not Broadway, but the Citibank-sponsored road show orchestrated to promote Jordan's investment opportunities and familiarise potential U.S. investors with the Kingdom. The trio will be joined in New York, Hartford and Boston by Jordan Information Bureau Director Rania Attala and Commercial Attaché Samir Mansour. Joining them from Amman are U.S. Ambassador in Amman Wesley Egan and Citibank/Jordan General Manager Suhair Al Ali Dabbas. Drs. Anani, Khalaf and Awadallah will also travel to Washington for talks with U.S. officials.

THE RIGHT STUFF: With nearly 10,000 new hotel rooms being reedied in Jordan by the turn of the century, serious thinking was required to determine how the industry was going to train the staff for these facilities. And so the serious turned to the expert who first estab-

lished the United Nations Development Programme/International Labour Organisation (ILO) hotel training school in Amman in 1980. Adnan Habbao has been appointed executive general coordinator of the Amman Hospitality and Tourism College and the Amman Training Hotel, the facilities entrusted to the private sector by the government to help meet the expansion in the hotel industry. Those who



Adnan Habbao

tapped him know he has the proper ingredients and know not to tamper with a good recipe. Mr. Habbao, a graduate of Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne, possesses Le Diplôme des Chefs d'Entreprises and is the only Arab national to hold this, the highest Swiss hotel qualification. Born in a hotel and raised in hotels by his hotelier parents, Mr. Habbao has executed projects larger than the Amman facility in China and Vietnam. He has been chief technical advisor of the ILO office for the hotel and tourism sector serving some 25 countries worldwide. Mr. Habbao served Royal Jordanian in developing the national airline's catering unit, developing and opening the Alia Gateway Hotel, and was vice president of Catering and Inflight Services during the period that RJ sought to change its corporate image and identity in the mid-80s.

THEN TAKE YOUR FIRST RIGHT: One of the new hotels which may do well to glean staff from the Amman Hospitality and Tourism College is the new Nabatean Castle Hotel in the Petra area, owned by long-time hotelier Abdul Aziz Kabariti. The hotel was officially opened last week when Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali cut the ceremonial ribbons. The property is one of many opened and to be opened in the Petra region. Mr. Kabariti and other family partners opened another landmark hotel in Aqaba in 1969, the Coral Beach Hotel. The Nabatean Castle, designed by award-winning Jordanian architect Rasim Badran, has 100 rooms, eight suites, an indoor pool, tennis courts and even a helicopter pad. Plans for the future include additional rooms and a conference facility. Located between Wadi Mousa and Taybeh, the hotel is fortunate to just miss the road-widening works en route to Taybeh which are obligating Taybeh-bound motorists to take a nearly 40-minute detour to reach their destinations.

THE RIGHT MOVES: Some people will be brushing up on their etiquette next week. The Institute of Diplomacy (ID) plans to host two experts from the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna to conduct workshops and lectures on etiquette, protocol and general rules of conduct on formal occasions. The week-long series will be attended by ID fellows in the Higher Diploma Programme and their spouses, participants in the Military Attaches Course, and spouses of diplomats and senior army officers and military attaches as well as ID staff. The activity, we are told, will include simulations and other practical applications. If it proves a success, perhaps others could benefit too some day.

IT'S HIS RIGHT: Jordanian Businessman's Association (JBA) President Hamdi Tabaa displayed his

own decorum when he took offence to Al Rai writer Tareq Masarweh's column in which the columnist, "with all due respect," discredited, in one fell swoop, the influence of The Lions Club, the Rotary clubs, and the JBA. Mr. Masarweh contended that as these organisations are not publicly elected, do not represent a general opinion and have no power in national decision-making. To those allegations Mr. Tabaa politely responded with a 10-point letter to the editor, delineating the composition, aims, activities, achievements, publications, and contributions of the JBA to Jordan's economic sector since its establishment more than a decade ago. The letter also makes references to the JBA's stand against normalisation with Israel. The JBA president ended by inviting Mr. Masarweh to visit the association for an up close look at what the organisation is all about.

THE RIGHT KEY: Tuning up to display diplomatic skills on another stage are American "artistic ambassadors" Mark Weiger and Robert Conway on piano when they visit Jordan next week for a concert and workshops with music students. Sponsored by the American Center of the United States Information Service, the programme includes an open air concert at Darat Al Funun in Jhal Weibdeh at 8:00 p.m. on June 3 and workshops at the National Music Conservatory and the Academy of music for piano and voice students. Mr. Weiger is principal oboist with the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra, the Illinois Symphony Orchestra and the Southwest Virginia Chamber Orchestra. He is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Iowa. Dr. Conway has been the pianist for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra since 1989. He has taught at the University of Michigan and Oakland University and is presently on the faculty of Wayne State University. The artistic envoys will be in the Kingdom for four days.

Jennifer Hamarneh

Hunting the legend of the Loch Ness monster

By Alex Perry
Agence France Presse

LONDON — "I used to install burglar alarms in Devon, but I became disillusioned with it and realised there was more to life, so I thought 'right'."

Steve Feltham's explanation of his mid-career change of tack may sound like any other. His remedy was wholly exceptional, however.

Six years ago Feltham, now 34, left his native

Devon in south west England and travelled almost the entire length of the country to northern Scotland to follow his childhood obsession — the Loch Ness monster.

He has been there ever since, Britain's only professional monster hunter, driving his camper van up and down the 38 kilometres of the peat-black water.

He keeps himself going by selling clay "Nessie" models to tourists, photographing and filming the loch and

taking echo soundings in the hope of finding some definite proof of the existence of what he calls "the animal."

On other, animals in his boat's observations — he claims just one sighting of an unexplained "disturbance" on the water for himself — and collection of other witness accounts lead him to believe that there are 20 to 30 Loch Ness monsters.

"Some people have seen more than one at the same

time, and others have described different colours," Feltham told AFP.

The more reliable reports, he says, have led him to draw up the following profile of a typical creature.

"I'm pretty certain it has one hump, a classic upturned boat for a back — some people have seen droplets running off it — and it's not as big as people say, about the size of a VW camper van."

"It chases a layer of fish in the first 1.6 metres of water

and a classic sighting will be when it misjudges the depth and its back breaks the surface."

"Think it prefers the night — they live in a very black environment — and it's very, shy — diving at any sound from the shore, he said. "That's probably why it has survived for so long."

His faith in the monster's existence goes back to his childhood when his family took him on a visit to the loch at the age of seven. "I got hooked on the mystery,

a little kid thinking 'there's a monster in there,' and I still find it fascinating that in the British Isles, which is all completely mapped and about which we know everything, there is still a mystery unexplained."

Since he arrived in Scotland, the anecdotal evidence and occasional scientific research from underwater teams he has amassed has convinced him of the existence of the "animals."

The scientists often say they found something, but

nothing conclusive, but it all adds a little each time."

His family, the unwitting instigators of his obsession, are "quite proud" of his single-mindedness, he adds.

Asked if he ever feels lonely, Feltham is emphatic: "I know I am in the place where I want to be," his story collecting has also earned him a number of friends around the loch, he says, and he is a keen reader.

"The most thought-provoking book I have ever

read is Mission, by Patrick Tilley, in which Jesus turns up in Manhattan in the early 1980s," he said in a recent interview.

"Tilley argues that we came from another planet as non-physical space aliens and occupied the bodies of the most practical-looking apes. I believe a lot of this book, but what do I know? After all, I believe in the Loch Ness monster."

Promoting quality analysis of the Arab World in Israel

BOOK REVIEW

Middle East Lectures 2, 1997
Essays by Charles Tripp, Timur Kuran, Judith Miller, P.J. Vatikiotis, Yezid Sayegh, Bernard Lewis, Norman Stillman, Dan Segre.
Published by The Moshe Dayan Centre for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1997, 102 pp.

I HAVE long been intrigued by the fact that Israeli scholars and institutions for decades carried out serious academic research on the Arab World generally without being able to visit any, or many, Arab countries, other than the territories that Israel had occupied since 1967. Some of the Israeli scholarship has been excellent, some mediocre, and some downright embarrassing, largely depending on the integrity of the scholars involved and their capacity to obtain first-hand information and to interpret it honestly and accurately.

I recently asked to read and review this book in part to learn from the respectable array of its contributors, and in part out of curiosity about what kind of information about the Arab/Israeli World Israeli scholars were getting in their own institutions. What I found has been somewhat complex, but generally impressive and encouraging.

The chapters in this book were all originally delivered by the authors at conferences or lectures at Tel Aviv University between December 1994 and June 1996, and they form the second such book in this series published by the Dayan Centre at the university. The series was launched by Asher Susser, and has been ably continued by the current director of the center, Martin Kramer, both of whom have done well to promote such rational, informative interaction among scholars interested in the modern Middle East.

The authors span a range of nationalities, religions and Middle Eastern expertise, and most of the essays are solid pieces of work that are both informative and thought-provoking, with one glaring exception of fantastic Orientalist entertainment masquerading as scholarly reporting. I shall review the pieces in their order of appearance in the book.

Charles Tripp of London University starts off with a solid but necessarily selective review of what he sees as "various attempts in the Middle East to devise distinctively Islamic responses to capitalism" during this century, responses which sought "to redirect human energies in order to ensure that all economic transactions are restrained by the ethical system of Islam — to ensure, in other words, that people are continually reminded of their obligations to God."

He lists several concerns about capitalism among Islamic thinkers, including the emergence of self-confident individualism and its equation with moral egotism and bedonism, the commodification of all things in the service of profit, the socially destructive potential of money and private property, the force of the market, and capitalism's links with Western imperialism.

He then reviews the responses of two broad groups of Islamic authors primarily concerned with social justice and solidarity or with societal development and economic growth. The first group includes writers such as Abdul

Qadir Awda, Sayyid Quth and others associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, while the second group included men such as Ahmad Najjar, Mohammad Saqr, Mahmud Ansari and others who were instrumental in imagining "an Islamic economy and giving it expression through Islamic banks." He concludes that there is some ambiguity in the Islamic responses to capitalism, but also sees "a communicative logic, even a synthesis," which can lead to accommodation with capitalism.

In the next chapter, Timur Kuran of the University of Southern California explores more deeply the basic principles of Islamic economics, with a view to assessing why this phenomenon emerged and what it means in economics and beyond. He generally, and often with justification, plays down the economic aspect of Islamic economics, noting that in banking and other fields it basically does the same thing as interest-based financial services but in a slightly different and more morally appealing package. He believes that the real purpose of Islamic economics is "to help prevent Muslims from assimilating into the emerging global culture whose core has a Western pedigree," and that "its essential function is to foster a sense of Muslim cultural separateness and to protect Muslim cultures."

This is an intriguing theory — but very much a theory open to discussion. The author's argument is impressive, but weakened by his almost total focus on economic issues, while many of the factors driving Muslims to develop countervailing systems to the West are political and national in nature. It is good that scholars should subject Islamic economics to such scrutiny, but it would be better to do so within a more comprehensive framework that takes into account non-economic motives and pressures in Muslim societies and psyches.

Judith Miller, the experienced New York Times reporter who is also marketing herself in the USA and the West as an expert on the Arab-Islamic World, follows with a short, superficial, disappointing piece that compares and contrasts attributes of three Islamist leaders — Hassan Turabi in Sudan, Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah in Lebanon, and Abdul Karim Soroush in Iran. She notes that they are all charismatic, often speak in democratic language that appeals to the West, have large egos, are politically shrewd and pragmatic, are not always consistent, and are often fatalists who equate their survival with God's design — but, she says, they also have major differences and operate in different circumstances.

This chapter is almost insulting to the intelligence, because everything she says about these three Islamists can be said about virtually any three political leaders chosen at random in any politically dynamic plot of land on Earth and maybe even beyond. Her naive analysis is further aggravated by incredibly silly and entertainment-oriented references such as Turabi's "half-foot-high white turban," "the region's rich diet," Sudan's "lighter-skinned Egyptian neighbours," Fadlallah resembling "an Islamic Santa Claus" and having a support network of "Katyusha-waving zealots," and Muslims learning "that there is no Islamic way to build a car or grow vegetables."

Judith Miller has often done a good job interviewing Middle Eastern heads of state. She should stick to what she does well, and stay out of the amusement park business.

The next chapter entitled *Royals and Revolutionaries in The Middle East*, by P.J. Vatikiotis of the University of London, explores and contrasts why

kings and presidents in our region have "a common drive for hegemonic power" and have generally "been unable to share power with others in their society." He explores various aspects of "popular autocracy" and the rule of kings who enjoy both tribal and religious legitimacy. He concludes with a more optimistic assessment of prospects for "an indigenous evolution toward more open political systems," giving Jordan as "perhaps a good example." He also touches on the issue of secularism, religion and modernity in the Middle East in both Arab and Israeli contexts, noting that neither side has constructed a seriously secular public order.

The noted Arab scholar Yezid Sayegh of Cambridge University follows with a long and rich chapter in which he analyses the Middle Eastern "system" of states and what is happening to it, with a view to understanding the "emerging structure of power and politics in the Middle East." His discussion of the recent Arab "system" and "order" shows both to have been dominated by balance of power politics, and neither to have been able to address the region's problems very effectively. Change is underway now due to the Arab-Israeli peace process, the end of the Cold War and post-Gulf War trends, which see a fragmentation and reorientation of state policies taking place throughout the Middle East, perhaps on the basis of "a balance of interest."

Exploring various factors that impact on the current transformation in the region (domestic issues, foreign relations, economic and strategic assets, among others) he notes the strength of Israel, domestic resource imbalances, the competition among Arab states, and the weak peace dividend as some reasons why the outlook for Arab regional security and cooperation is not good.

Bernard Lewis of Princeton University, in his "Reflections on Islamic historiography," reviews the way in which Islamic societies have handled the writing of history. He notes that Islamic historical material is rich and varied, and the advent of Islam in many parts of the world also ushered in the writing of history. He then reviews the different kinds of Islamic historical texts, including sagas and heroic literature, the recording of precedents (including hadith, adab, and classical Arabic prose literature), and biographical literature. Lewis touches on how Muslim historiography dealt with "the other" (not very often, or deeply); he then concludes with a review of the functions of Muslim historical texts (to learn, to avoid past mistakes, and to legitimise, justify, promote and persuade), and the important point of how alive history remains among Muslims (raising a point, I suggest, that needs more analysis by erudite scholars such as Lewis: Since non-Muslims in Islamic societies tend also to have a deep historical memory, is it possible that this is not necessarily a religious but a national/political dimension that should be better identified?).

Rami G. Khouri

Undersizing personal computers

By Jean-Claude Elias

THE ASTONISHING variety of available PC configurations can be considered as a blessing or, on the contrary, as a curse. For each discrete component that contributes to make up a personal computer, there exists numerous models, from the cheapest to the most expensive, and from the simplest to the most performing. Taken separately, each of these elements will drive you mad if you want to select the most appropriate. Take them all at the same time and you're playing "Million Impossible." This is why you usually rely on the vendor and... on your budget, which greatly simplifies the task.

The vendor, however, is hard pressed to sell you any configuration. This will make you a registered customer, with a high potential for further upgrades, improvements and purchases. This is why you are usually offered the cheapest configuration — any combination of processor, screen, keyboard, mouse, etc. that works. Currently a basic Pentium costs a little less than JD1,000 in Jordan. What can you do with such a system? A lot, certainly. And yet...

Unless you are doing very elementary word processing for example, you will soon discover that the basic Pentium we mentioned is not fast enough, or doesn't have enough hard disk storage capacity or doesn't display high quality pictures, or any other shortcoming. You'll then start to upgrade the memory, then replace the CD-ROM drive, then buy a better monitor and so forth. Typically, in less than a year you'll end up paying a little more than twice what you paid when you purchased the basic system. Had you bought all the "extras" from the very beginning, the total amount would have been less than the repeated, unpleasant payments.

Since the beginning of this year several advertisements have appeared in local newspapers promoting Pentium PC



for about JD800. These configurations are nothing but start-up systems. A PC that would fulfill your needs for a reasonable period of time, with decent disk storage, processing power, memory size and a respectable multimedia kit — speakers, sound card and CD-ROM drive — would cost about JD2,000.

Undersizing computer configurations is but a cheap sale trick. Ask any independent consultant or specialist and he will tell you not to acquire a basic system — it will only bring you frustration and disappointment. I have often heard users complain: "I've bought a Pentium, a real Pentium, and it crawls!" The word Pentium is hardly enough to translate into power and performance. A striking example is the price of Pentium chips: The entry level Pentium 133 is priced at JD130. The top-of-the-line Pentium Pro P200 with 1MB built-in cache memory is at more than JD3,000. And this is only the processor chip, you still need the hard disk, the memory, the screen, etc. One can easily configure a dream-like PC for JD7,000 to 10,000.

Those who make extensive use of CD-ROMs and/or modems (E-mail, Internet) need the most powerful computer they can afford to buy. Whatever the configuration, it is certainly not the basic JD800 deceptive offer.

Always the last to know

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen



I BUMPED into my old friend Rajab the other day. I had last seen him back in September of last year when he told me about his little adventure in a hotel down by the sea where he was planning to get away from it all. I remember that he told me a story about 'eggs any style' and the compensation he had suffered from after two weeks of experimenting with 'eggs Art Deco' and neo-classical eggs.

This time round, because he was in the mood for another chat, I gave him a mug of 'coffee no-style' and left him to do all the talking. Something which he really loves. He is after all a public relations expert and talking is his main area of expertise.

You should have seen him there. He was so full of himself. His newly gained position of responsibility had not managed to put a leash around his tongue. His language was as straightforward, honest and witty as ever.

Normally, he could talk to you quite extensively about the most complex and specialised issues. Because of this talent, he was usually hired, and handsomely paid, to simply be himself: To talk forever about anything. In this respect, Rajab was certainly a lucky man.

Rajab was not like the rest of us. While we had people promising us one good thing after another with us being gullible enough to believe them, he never did fall for this — the oldest trick in the book of trades. This was because he hardly had any expectations to start with. He was a simple man. He believed in simple things.

He never did expect others to solve his problems or even to lend him money so that he could do the things that he would have done for free.

He was his own man. And when he got as far as he did, it was not because he knew the right people who pulled the

right strings with the right kind of people. It was because of his convictions.

He went a long way because he was himself. Plain old Rajab. A man. Just a normal guy out to make a decent living and to leave a mark on society. Or so he would claim when asked about his good fortune. But there had always been a darker side to Rajab. The Force was with him.

When I asked him whether he was bothered about all the latest fuss regarding newspapers and magazines? He said he wasn't.

In fact he had just come from the bank where he had got a loan for JD1,000 to set up his own newspaper. He figured that this amount would be sufficient to cover his reporters' salaries, the running cost of the printing equipment and computers and printers and ink cartridges and presses and... and the rent for the office space.

This idea was as wild as out of this world as he himself was not. Or maybe he was after all. Remember the dark side of the force. He had to be looney if he thought he could issue a newspaper with just JD1,000. Or was he? We may never know the answer now.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, May 29, 1997

3:30	The Holy Koran	7:30	News Headlines
3:35	French Programmes	7:35	Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
4:00	NBA	8:00	Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
5:00	Out Of This World	8:30	The Churchills
6:00	French Programmes	9:10	Renegade
7:00	Le Journal	10:00	News In English
7:15	French Programme	10:30	One West Walkiki
7:30	News headlines	11:01	Sisters
7:35	Parenthood		
8:00	Cinema Cinema		
8:30	The American Chart Show		
9:10	Kung Fu — The Legend Continues		
10:00	News In English		
10:30	Feature Film — Family Rescue		
	George Scott		
12:00	Taratata		

Friday, May 30, 1997

3:00	The Holy Koran	3:30	The Holy Koran
3:05	Leo The Lion — Cartoon	3:40	Spirou
3:35	Wish Bone	4:05	Neighbours
4:00	Winners Down Under	4:30	In The Wild (Doc.)
4:50	High Tech-Culture (Doc.)	6:00	French Programmes
5:15	Glorious Gardens	7:00	Le Journal
6:00	French Programmes	7:15	French Programme
7:00	Le Journal	7:30	News Headlines
7:15	French Programme	7:35	Parenthood
7:30	News Headlines	8:00	Discover Magazine
7:35	America's Funniest Home Videos	8:30	Murder She Wrote
8:00	The Health Show	9:10	Highlander
8:30	Hawkeye	10:00	News In English
9:10	500 Nations	10:30	The Wright Verdict
10:00	News In English	11:15	Homeside
10:30	Mini Series — People Like Us		
12:00	NBA		

Saturday, May 31, 1997

3:30	The Holy Koran	3:30	Holy Koran
3:35	French Programmes	3:35	French Cartoon
4:00	Gillette (Sports)	4:00	Super Sport Follies
4:30	Innovation (Doc.)	4:30	Dog House
4:50	Tilt 23.5	5:00	Square One
5:15	Blue Heelers	5:10	Album Show
6:00	French Programmes	6:10	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal	7:30	News Headlines
7:15	French Programme	7:35	Coach
7:30	News Headlines	8:00	Tilt 23.5
7:35	Hanging' with Mr. Cooper	8:30	Encounter
8:00	Magazine Zero One	9:10	Nature Of Things (Documentary)
10:00	News In English	10:00	News In English
10:30	MacGyver	10:30	West Beach
11:15	Feature Film	11:15	Drug Wars

Wednesday, June 4, 1997

3:30	The Holy Koran	3:30	Holy Koran
3:35	French Cartoon	3:35	French Cartooo
4:05	Global Family	4:00	Neighbours
4:30	Energy Express	4:30	Spell Binder
4:50	Our World (Doc)	4:50	Forests Of The World (Doc.)
5:15	American Chart Show	5:30	Bordertown
6:00	French Programmes	6:00	French Programmes
7:00	Le Journal	7:30	News Headlines
7:15	French Programme	7:35	Grace Under Fire (Doc.)
		8:00	Soldier's Diary
		8:30	Challenges
		9:10	Spenser For Hire
		10:00	News In English
		10:25	Land's End
		11:15	American Gothic

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mohammad A. Shuqair

STRANGE BELIEFS

• IF someone wants to keep the fox away from a chicken coop, he must go three times round it pulling behind him a pig's fat hung by a hazelnut branch and a hemp thread.

• TUESDAY is generally considered a flourishing day in the field of commerce. One shouldn't trim one's nails, let one's nose bleed or fix a rose in one's buttonhole on this very day.

• NO. 13 was well-known to bring happiness beyond the Atlantic. In Europe the case was reversed. Fridays having No. 13 are best known to be the happiest days ever.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

** Try your luck!
Jarrib hassak.

** His good reputation is on everyone's lips.
Sum'atohu at-tayyiba ala kol lisan.

** Tears welled from his eyes.
Jadat aynahu bid-domu'.

** He is past thirty.
Jawaza ath'thalatheen minal omr.

** They starved to death.
Matoo ju'an.

** It would be nice if he did it.
Hab'batha law fa'ala thalek.

** He plays a double game.
Howa yal'ab alal-habtain.

** Everything became confused.
Ikhtalata al-haabil bin-naabil.

** Lies have short wings.
Habl al-katheb qasir.

JOKES

• A MODERN doctor gave this advice to one of his patients:
"Next time, when you catch a heavy cold, drink a bottle of whisky. Remember — the whisky won't cure you, but it will keep the germs too drunk to bother you so much."

• FEMALE STUDENT: "But excuse me, madam, I don't think I deserve an absolute zero."
TEACHER: "I know that — but I'm helpless. It is the lowest that I'm allowed to give to any student."

• JUDGE: "How long were you in jail last time?"
ACCUSED: "Seven years!"
JUDGE: "No charge, sir, everything was free."

HAPPY DREAMS

• ABUCTION — To dream you are being abducted indicates success against opposition whether business or social. If you dream someone else was being abducted, then you will soon get unexpected news.

• DANGER — A dream of contrary. You will overcome your difficulties if you faced the danger. If the danger was

of a physical nature and you avoided it, it is a warning to look after your health.

• BLOOD — Be prepared for a period of hard work against hostile forces if you saw blood in your dream. If you were bleeding, try to avoid any sort of controversy with friends or relatives; however, if the blood was that involved in a transfusion, you can expect your difficulties to be very transitory.

PUZZLES

(A) COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

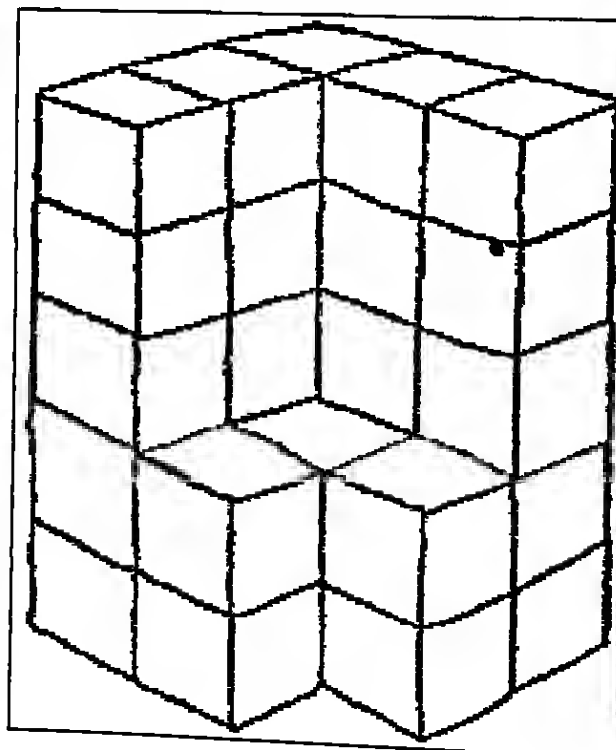
SCOTLAND 27186453
LOTS 7293
LOAN 8367
AND (?)

(B) INSERT THE MISSING LETTER:

N Q L S J U ...?...

(C) SUGAR LUMPS:

SEE how quickly you can count the number of sugar lumps in the pile below?



BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. What is the name of the highest mountain in the British Isles?
2. What country do we call the "Land of the Midnight Sun?"
3. What is a begum?
4. What is the length, in feet, of a fathom?
5. What is the derivation of the word "tantalise?"
6. Who invented printing?
7. What is a samovar?

RENDEZVOUS WITH ART

'Unity & Diversity' — abstract expressionism and impressionism by Abdul Ra'ouf Sham'oun

By Mahmoud I. Mufti

AFTER THE visitor to this exhibition is through asking herself/himself why there seem to be three separate exhibitions in one, attention is promptly turned to the carnival of colours and ideas expressed therein. The general themes that seem to correspond to the three distinct series of works constituting the exhibition are: landscapes, faces and abstract expressionist renditions of expansionist suburban life.

The stunning, almost haunting scenery of Wadi Wala (30 km south of Madaba, near Tafila) has inspired this first series of landscape paintings," says artist Abdul Ra'ouf Sham'oun, disclosing that: "What I seek in my quests to these wondrous regions of our beautiful country are not so much details and specifics, rather, the spirit of the place. Or what one might call, 'spiritual impressions.' Accordingly, a distinct impressionistic style characterises the works."

Indeed, Sham'oun exercises a refreshingly uninhibited hand in his brush strokes, the formations themselves and the eccentric usage of colours. Although immediately discernible as belonging to the school of impressionism, most of this series' works are heavily abstracted. Collectively, they recall the general stylistic spirit — though not specifics — of



Impressionist landscape scene of Wadi Wala, Jordan

celebrated impressionist landscape paintings such as Paul Cezanne's *Mont Sainte-Victoire* (c.1890), Natalia Gontcharova's *Street in Moscow* (1909), Karl Schmidt-Rottluff's *Flowering Trees* (1909), and Maurice de Vlaminck's *The Circus* (1906).

It is almost uncanny that a Jordanian artist's depiction of the hills and valleys of

Wadi Wala (the Valley of Wala) could evoke a stylistic spirit so similar to that of a French artist (Cezanne) portraying *Mont Sainte-Victoire*, near Aix-en-Provence, virtually a century ago. This is not to say that the stylistic innovation here is not uniquely that of Sham'oun, but it is also one of the universal truths that the talents and creativity of

any particular generation of artists find a rebirth in the works of subsequent generations. It then becomes the task of the latter — unless their creative vision is restricted to mere masterful emulation — to push the frontiers of the stylistic school they have adopted, to new territories, adding more than a nuance here, an innuendo there, etc., that discerns their fresh work as an original reinvention of the old, and hopefully, well beyond.

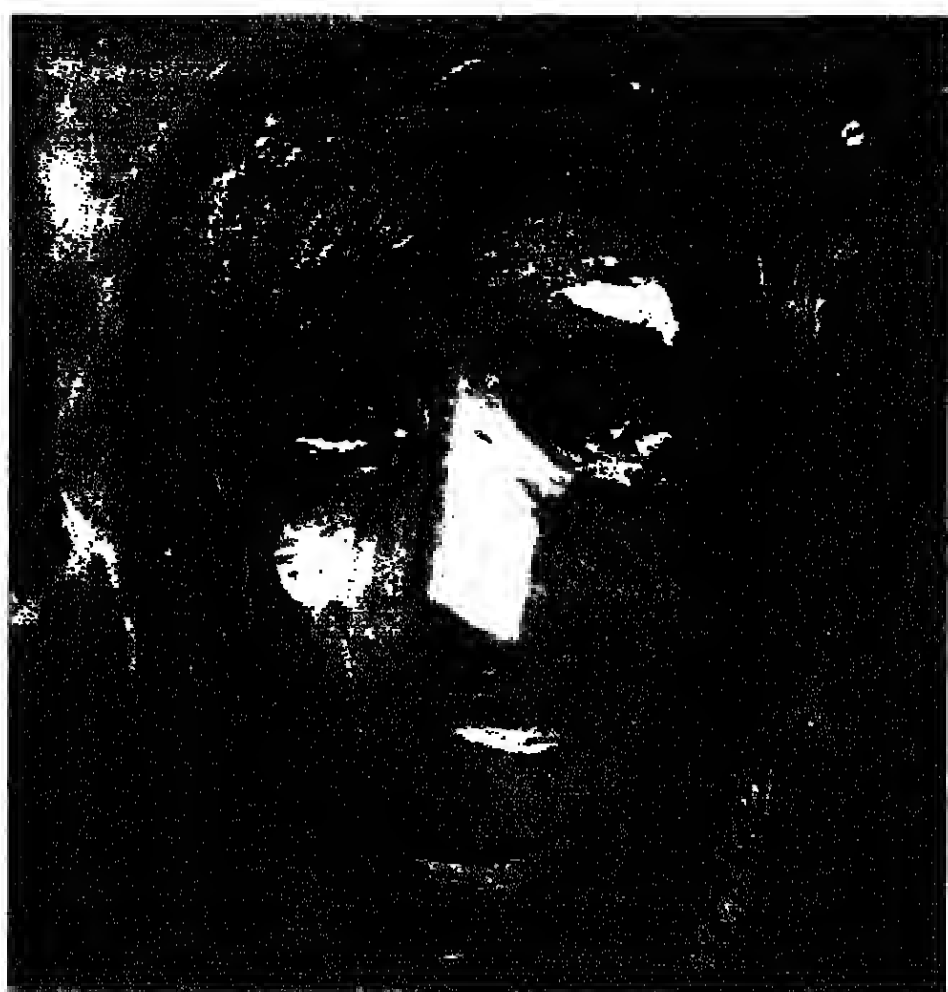
In that regard — and in the opinion of this writer — Sham'oun has staged a successful reinvention of the stylistic genre that must have inspired him (even if subliminally) in this particular landscape series. The depicted scenes distinctly pertain to Jordanian topography, and anyone possessed of sufficient familiarity with that will pick up vibes to such effect. The strength of the works lies not so much in their aesthetic beauty, nor in any rapturously philosophical evocations they impart — and that opinion is purely subjective anyway — but in the aura that they are able to radiate and project their convincingness. They convince the viewer that Jordan, and not some corner of Continental Europe, is the subject here. They are atmospheric in that they adequately convey the sense of raw savage beauty that constitutes much of the

charm of the increasingly-threatened Jordanian countryside. If that atmosphere can be likened to any other one, it would be that of the rugged rocky virgin landscapes of Sardinia and Corsica.

Infinite variants of bright green, yellow, blue, orange, mauve, peach, etc., conspire to create the valleys, ridges, creeks and gorges of Wadi Wala in Sham'oun's works. The artist evidently chose to substitute what would generally be considered "natural colours" for exaggerated bright colours (more often seen in surrealist art) instead of altering the tones of the natural colours as they change with the light and shade. The ravines, hill-sides, cliffs and all surrounding landscape have been reduced and simplified into geometrical shapes and planes of colour. The results are paintings that may not accurately reproduce the scenes themselves, but which evoke the spirit, tones and topographical gradations through the interplay of light and shade.

"Indeed, this is precisely my point," explains the artist. "Were these works to represent an exercise in depicting purely what is seen — as seen — they would be untrue to the vision that would supposedly have governed the parameters of their intrinsic creativity. As it is, however, they represent an attempt at abstracted impressionism inspired by the original scenery. Moreover, to help ensure that I allow myself the necessary freedom to exercise my own influence on them, I merely draw rough sketches of the scenery on location. I then retreat back to my studio and complete the work there, filling in the rest with my personal vision of what forms and colour-combinations best combine to evoke the atmosphere and effect I seek. As to why I actually seek particular 'effects and atmospheres' over others, there can never be a clear-cut answer to that. One may simply put it in terms of 'the artist at work' responding to whatever inner sensibilities govern his/her temperament at the time."

Moving onto the second series of works in the exhibition, *The Faces*, one is struck by the sadness and sense of personal loss grafted into most of them, not to mention their nightmarishly unflattering contortions. The most cheerful among them are — at best — aloof, detached and zombie-like.



A face by Sham'oun

None appear happy or even approaching neutral disposition. But so what? Well, all this suddenly becomes interesting when the artist reveals that not a single one of those faces is representative of characters from real life. Had that been the case, one would have just accepted the fact that the artist decided to portray the entire members of the Adams Family, Uncle Fester and all..... However, we soon come to learn that these personages are rooted entirely in the artist's creative realm. No further probing is attempted following that illumination.

Stylistically, the works range from mild impressionism to overt abstract expressionism and figurative form, with vague smatterings of Picasso-esque surrealism, employing mild and faded pastel colours in the Ahmad Na'wash school of the 70's and 80's, to deep and highly contrasting colour-holocausts, in the manner of Marwan Qassab Bashi. In the latter group, it is possible to make out the forceful gestures of the brush's application in building up the image, layer by layer. The sombre and perfunctory aura of the faces is further exacerbated by the overall murkiness of the paint-effect, in what indicates that the individual lay-

erings may have purposely been applied while previous layers were still quite aqueous. The final effect is rather psychedelic and, in some cases, delirious with a morbid frenzy.

The final series in the exhibition is the most abstract and absorbing one to behold. Here, the artist gives full interpretative freedom to the viewer, with little clues as to what the subject matter is. At first glance, one is taken by the cubist style of some of the works, with the intricate interplay of colours associated therewith. Blocks, rectangles and geometric formations of all sizes, denominations and colours interact to produce an effect that will puzzle the viewer, but also stimulate her/his curiosity. Sham'oun reveals that the ensemble of overlapping and superimposed blocks are in fact intended to evoke impressions of remnants of old rural houses that are visibly giving way to the encroachment of tenement buildings of the ever-expanding and invasive suburbia. Yet he stresses the dynamism accruing to these locations, in that demolition is giving way to new construction. At this juncture, the viewer may plausibly ponder the human dimension of such change and no doubt consider the resultant impact on

the former old stone-house dwellers, and whether they had any say in the elimination-by-engulfing of their rural settings.

It may not be immediately clear how the notions of "Unity and Diversity" (the exhibition's title) fit into the overall rubric, all the more making it a necessity to visit this exhibition by this well-established artist, Abdul Ra'ouf Sham'oun. The artist is a recipient of the prestigious National Encouragement Prize of Arts (1990), as well as the International Sharqa Biennale Prize (1993). He has held ten solo exhibitions between 1972 - 1997, as well as numerous group exhibitions, exhibiting regionally and internationally in Palestine, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Algeria, Bangladesh, Spain, the United Kingdom, Norway, the Ukraine and China. Sham'oun is well known for his extensive critical analytical studies and research on the plastic arts. He is a member of the Jordanian Plastic Arts Association, a member of the Jordanian Writers' Association and is currently a teacher of arts at the Amman Academy.

The exhibition opened on May 18 and closes on Thursday June 5th at the Baladna Art Gallery, Wasfi Ti Street. Tel: 5537598



Abstraction of suburban dwellings by Sham'oun

Girl, 4, stirs film controversy

By Stephen Schaefer
Reuters

NEW YORK — When movie stars win best actress awards at film festivals, it is usually ho-hum, who cares? But when the venerable Venice Film Festival awarded its 1996 best actress prize to a 4-year-old girl, controversy ensued.

Jury President Roman Polanski had to silence the boos once the shocker was announced that Tiny Victoire Thivisol was being awarded the festival's coveted Silver Lion for her performance in the French-language *Ponette*.

Then the controversial filmmaker scolded the naysayers by revealing that the jury, which included Anjelica Huston and writer Paul Auster (Smoke) was unanimous.

For French writer-director Jacques Doillon (pronounced Doughy-yon), it was a bizarre victory. Doillon has made "seven or eight" films with children. This was the first one with someone so young.

"If an actress moves you, whether she be 4 or a 24-year-old professional, I don't see the difference," he said in a recent interview

prior to his film's New York opening on May 23.

"It's an anti-children racism not to give a prize to someone under 4 or under 6. But the fact is Victoire moved the audience and the jury felt she was deserving of this prize."

As this tender drama begins, Thivisol as Ponette is in a hospital bed, recovering after an auto accident with her mother who was driving. Her father arrives, who tells her a "story" about her mother.

A child confronts death

Only later when she leaves the hospital does Ponette discover her mother has died. She is inconsolable and the rest of the film is Ponette's attempt to come to grips with this tragedy.

"I wanted to make a film not about death, but against death," Doillon explains. "About the refusal of death. But I wanted to work with a small child who doesn't yet understand the concept of death. Who has other mental faculties but doesn't understand what death is."

By talking to young children, Doillon discovered that happens at the age of four or five. He wrote a syn-

opsis of his story, then for six months conducted "research" with six teams going to primary schools "all over France, although mostly in cities like Lille, Strasbourg, Paris and Lyons."

"I sent them not to just find children for the film," he says. "But to listen to the children we videotaped, hear their opinions about not only death but their lives. Kids are much more wary of adults than with each other at this age."

"But I wanted the point of view of a child. Therefore, it was very important to hear what these children had to say before writing the script."

Thivisol, an only child whose mother sells beauty products and whose father sells fabrics, was discovered in a Lyons school when she was 3 1/2. When filming began she was 4.

In France, Ponette was a modest success. Some critics wondered if it was damaging to have such a young child act out so traumatic a story.

"Many adults don't recognise the rich nature of children at this age," counters Doillon. "They have a restricted view and see them as intelligent domestic ani-

mals. In terms of emotions, kids understand them better than adults."

"They feel more extremes, they cry more in a day, they laugh more. I'd just tell them what the scene was about and what the emotions are about and they understood these emotions. I was not a puppet master."

"Where Victoire cries, it's not because I said, 'you have to cry,' it's that she felt those emotions based on what I told her. If she felt she wanted to cry, she would. These great emotional scenes were the easiest for her to do."

He added that he was struck by the force of imagination that children of this age have.

Will little Thivisol be a one-shot wonder, or go on?

"It would be good for her for a while not to worry about films and decide later what she wants to do," answers the filmmaker who consults with the child's parents on other offers.

"Films can be good for children, she was fine at the beginning and even better at the end, but I don't think she should do films for no reason. If there's a good script or good director I don't see why not."



Four-year-old actress Victoire Thivisol caused a controversy when she won the Best Actress prize during the 1996 Venice Film Festival for her role in the French-language movie *Ponette*. The movie which opens this week in New York, is a story about Ponette played by Thivisol whose mother dies in an auto accident (Reuters photo)

Why pain gets worse

By John Newell

SCIENTISTS HAVE discovered why pain gets more intense if nothing is done to stop whatever is causing it. The surprising answer is that the increase in the intensity of pain sensation is due not to more frequent signals from pain nerve cells but to the production of a locally acting hormone around the site of the pain.

As well as answering a question that has puzzled scientists for many years, it is hoped that the discovery may lead to new non-addictive painkillers without side-effects.

Practical applications

The leader of the United Kingdom team responsible for the new discovery is Peter McNaughton, professor of physiology at King's College in London. He says: "We started (researching) this because pain is really rather poorly understood, while other sensations such as touch or smell or hearing have been extensively studied. But somehow pain has been bypassed, although its study obviously has great practical applications."

Professor McNaughton removed nerve cells that carry pain messages from animals under anaesthetic and kept the nerve cells alive in the laboratory. Although isolated nerve

cells cannot feel pain (it takes a complex brain to do that), they can be stimulated in ways that would cause pain if they were part of a living animal or human.

When that was done to the isolated nerve cells, they produced electrical signals that, in an intact animal or human, would travel to the brain and produce the sensation of pain. The first thing was to ensure that the response of the isolated cells was the same as that within a complete living organism.

"We played a jet of hot liquid over the nerve cells causing a stimulus very similar to that caused by touching a hot radiator," says Professor McNaughton. "And we found that the heat threshold, the temperature at which they began to respond, was very similar in these isolated nerve cells to the temperature that a human volunteer reported as beginning to be painful."

Surprise Mechanism

Once they knew that the isolated nerves were behaving like nerves in a human body, the King's College team members went on to examine the electrical signals produced in them in more detail. The big surprise came when they looked at how the nerve cells responded to a continuing, repeated painful stimulus.

"It's a familiar phenomenon that if you pick up an object like a hot cup of coffee, then the sensation of pain gets more intense with time. But we were very surprised to find that the nerves weren't doing this."

"When we applied a repeated stimulus, the electrical response of the nerves didn't increase. But if we did the same thing to a human volunteer then his/her sensation of pain would increase. So that was one big point of difference between isolated pain nerve cells and whole animals or humans."

If we have to listen to a continuing loud noise, or look at meaningless changing patterns, then our response to them decreases as time goes on. Their effect is reduced. It's only with painful stimuli that the opposite happens and our response increases as time goes on. Of course, there's a good reason for this: if we got used to pain as we do to other stimuli then we might ignore serious damage to our bodies.

Analgesics Hope

Until now it has been thought that pain nerve cells increased their response by firing off more frequent or stronger signals. But Peter McNaughton found they did it in another way. Continuing painful stimulus makes the pain nerve cells produce a hormone, a chemical messenger

called bradykinin, that is known to cause pain and inflammation.

This is what makes pain get worse as painful stimuli continue. Bradykinin sets off a chain reaction that makes nerve cells more sensitive to pain. As a result of this the same continuing stimulus feels more and more painful.

Now that this is understood, will it lead to new painkillers? Peter McNaughton is cautiously optimistic. "We very much hope so. There are specific inhibitors of the enzyme (body chemical) that is triggered by bradykinin and we have already shown that one of them is a very effective inhibitor of the enhancement by bradykinin of the pain signal."

"The enzyme, known as PKC, exists in 12 different versions and it may be that only one of them is responsible for the enhancement of pain. And if we can target just that one form and inhibit its effects then we may be able to knock (out) the intensification of pain without affecting other functions of PKC in the body."

Completely new painkillers based on this approach must be several years away. But there is certainly reason to hope that they will be developed. The hope is that, unlike today's analgesics, they will be both non-addictive and free from side-effects — London Press Service.

Medical trial to check pregnancy-deaths

By Phyllida Brown

LONDON — Some 20,000 women in seven countries are to undergo a major medical trial later this year in a global effort to check one of the biggest killers of women — a condition where a woman bleeds to death immediately after childbirth.

The irony is that the condition is avoidable — modern medicine has largely prevented it in developed countries for some 60 years. But in poorer countries, it is an entirely different story. In these countries, more than 300 women bleed to death every day during childbirth or as a result of other avoidable complications of pregnancy.

Now, for the first time, scientists think they may have discovered a practical tool to reduce the death toll. A simple, cheap tablet that could stop the bleeding. It is set to be tested in the trial to be coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The health disaster is called Postpartum Haemorrhage, and it strikes unpredictably in the last stage of labour — immediately after the child is born.

After nine months of pregnancy, the uterus is rich with blood vessels, so that 700 millilitres of blood pass through the organ every minute. If the uterus fails to contract after delivery, these vessels can bleed like an open tap, often leading to instantaneous death or permanent disability.

"A woman can bleed out in half an hour," says Metin Gülmezoglu, an obstetrician at the U.K. Cochrane Centre, a clinical research centre in Oxford, England. "If problems are not anticipated, sometimes you just discover a pool of blood under the patient and see her colour change and she faints."

Even if a woman survives, she may suffer brain damage or kidney failure from the loss of blood supply to these organs.

"Any woman who gives birth can have a Postpartum Haemorrhage which may threaten her life," says Mahmoud Fathalla, President of the International Federation of Gynaecology and Obstetrics and former director of the WHO's research programme on human reproduction.

At a moment that should

be happy, says Fathalla, "the woman witnesses her blood drain out of her body in big gushes."

Since the 1930s, doctors in the West have been able to prevent Postpartum Haemorrhage by injecting women with oxytocin — the synthetic form of a hormone — in the last stage of labour. The injection makes the muscles of the uterus contract, so that the blood vessels close.

But the drug is not available to millions of women in poor countries. In any case, it must be stored in cool, dark conditions, which is not always possible in many countries. In addition, health facilities in many developing countries are concentrated in urban centres. In Africa, for instance, 50-75 per cent of physicians are based in cities and towns — and they only account for 10 per cent of the population.

In fact, WHO research shows a large proportion of births in developing countries take place outside clinics or hospitals, where a tablet could mean the difference between life and death.

According to WHO's

1996 annual report, the proportion of 'institutional deliveries' in developing countries can be as low as one per cent of all births in Bhutan, two per cent in Bangladesh, 10 per cent in Niger, and 20 per cent in Gabon. In contrast, 99 per cent of births in developed countries take place in an institutional environment.

It was his first-hand knowledge of the problem that stimulated Egyptian researcher Hazem Al Refaey and his colleagues at University College Hospital in London to seek a solution.

Dr. Refaey knew from his earlier studies that Misoprostol, an anti-ulcer drug, makes the uterus contract and reasoned that it might also help stop Postpartum Haemorrhage.

In March this year, he and his colleagues published the first evidence to support his hunch. In a study in the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, he showed that Postpartum Haemorrhage occurred in only six per cent of more than 230 women who delivered babies at the hospital and who were given Miso-

prostol by mouth immediately afterwards.

The figure is comparable with the rates in women who are given conventional injections.

Dr. Refaey now hopes that women in poor countries can benefit from Misoprostol. "I feel that one has an obligation to women in developing countries, coming from a country like mine," he says.

"Every woman in labour is at risk and every woman should have access to immediate care," Dr. Fathalla adds. "The good news is that with early and efficient management no woman should die because of this

terrible complication."

In principle, Misoprostol has several advantages over injections, Dr. Refaey says: It is chemically stable, so it will not deteriorate in poor storage conditions; it will be easy to provide through simple healthcare services; and in countries where sterile injection equipment is scarce, it will be safer. In addition, it is a cheap drug, costing only about one dollar per treatment.

But Dr. Refaey warns that there is still no firm evidence that the drug can be used as an alternative to injections. The small London study did not directly compare the two treatments;

nor was it 'blind' — that is, doctors knew what treatment the women were getting, which may have biased their interpretation of the results.

The real test of the tablet will be a major, WHO-coordinated trial with women in China, South Africa, Argentina, Nigeria, Egypt, Ireland and Britain.

The year-long trial will start in July and it will be 'blind' — each woman will receive both an injection and a tablet, one of which will be a dummy. Because neither midwives nor those being tested will know who is getting which real treat-

ment, the trial is expected to be fair, says Jose Villar, a WHO obstetrician.

Dr. Fathalla — like Dr. Villar and Dr. Refaey — hopes the trials will succeed. But everyone agrees that it will take more than a pill to make childbirth safe.

That task also needs trained birth attendants, rapid emergency transport systems and good obstetric services, Fathalla says. And one more thing: "Over and above all that, we need the commitment to women's right to life, and the policy and financial decision that mother's lives are worth saving," he adds — Panos Feature.

Study finds drug cocktail drastically cuts HIV deaths

By Maggie Fox Reuter

LONDON — AIDS researchers have published the results of a key study which is changing the way HIV-positive patients are treated. Their report showed that adding a third drug, Lamivudine (Glaxo-Wellcome's EpiVir), to an AIDS combination based on Glaxo's AZT (Zidovudine) greatly increased survival of those infected with the HIV virus and stopped them getting worse.

The results were so striking that the study was stopped in July to allow everyone in the trial to get EpiVir. The full results of the study were published in the Lancet medical journal.

The Caesar (Canada, Australia, Europe and South Africa) trial included 1,895 patients from around the world who got a year's treatment

with either AZT, or AZT plus either Roche's Hivid (DDC) or Bristol-Myers Squibb's Videx (DDI).

All also got either a placebo or EpiVir or EpiVir plus Zalcitabine, an experimental non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI) made by Janssen Pharmaceutica NV, a Belgian unit of Johnson & Johnson.

There were 57 per cent fewer cases of progression to AIDS or death in those who got the extra drugs. The more drugs the better, and doctors have been advised to abandon using just two drugs.

The most advanced regimens now also include a protease inhibitor, a class of drugs that attacks the virus at a different point of its replicative cycle than the AZT class of reverse transcriptase inhibitors. The NNRTIs add a third dimension.

"In the final analysis of

1,840 patients, progression (to AIDS) had occurred in 20 per cent of 471 placebo-treated patients, nine per cent of 907 Lamivudine-treated patients and nine per cent of 462 patients who received Lamivudine plus Zalcitabine," the team, coordinated by David Cooper of the University of New South Wales in Sydney, wrote.

Adding Zalcitabine did seem to help a little but the researchers said the study was not big enough to determine this and urged further research.

Mark Feinberg of the office of AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health in Maryland said the study served historical rather than current needs, but nonetheless would help doctors decide how to treat patients with HIV.

Because HIV rapidly develops resistance, there was no point in using a combi-

nation of just two drugs, he said in a commentary on the study.

"This is the most effective and reliable way of preventing the emergence of drug-resistant viruses and of achieving maximum protection from HIV-induced immune-system damage is to use two nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (eg, Zidovudine and Lamivudine) with a potent protease inhibitor," Dr. Feinberg wrote.

The Caesar group noted that it is expensive to treat HIV-infected patients, but said the costly drugs could save money in the end.

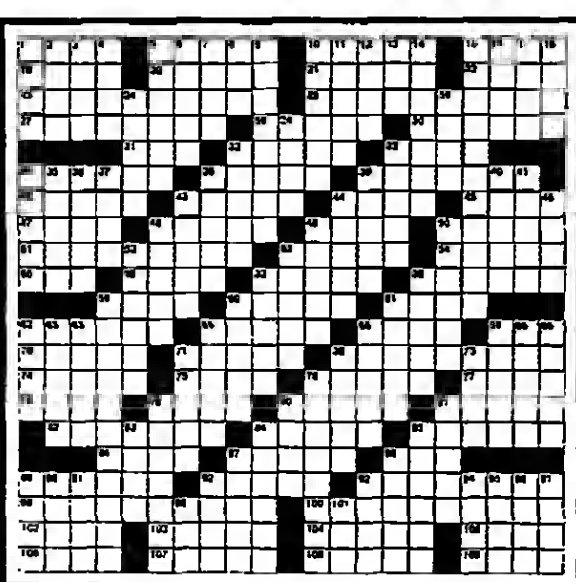
"In this study we observed that the delayed disease progression associated with Lamivudine use resulted in significantly fewer patients needing hospital admission, unscheduled outpatient and emergency-care visits, and HIV-related medications," they said.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

POSSSESSIONS
By Harvey L. Chew

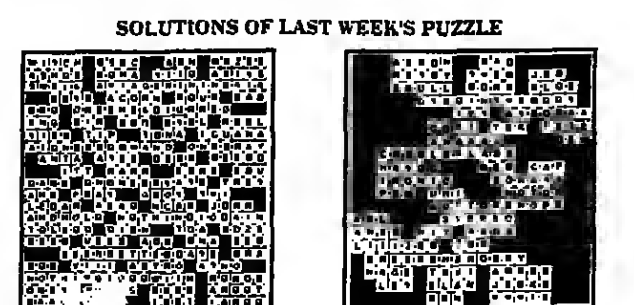
ACROSS

- 1 Dry
- 2 Vessels
- 3 Blood
- 4 Green
- 5 Precipitate
- 6 Gynaecology
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- 8 Menstrual
- 9 Jitter
- 10 Magnifying
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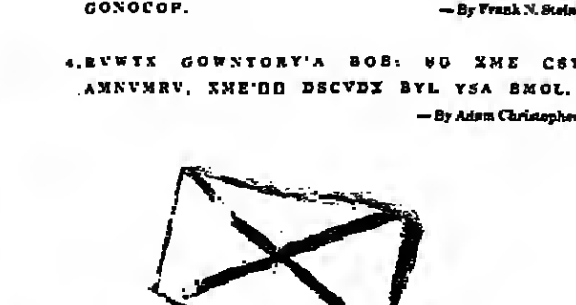


Diagramless, 19x19
By Frances Burton

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- 60 Down



1. Glib sailor on shore leave visits cute girlfriend that he left behind. Get cold shoulder.
2. Some neighbors probably would complain about hubbub created by big Hawaiian-style lasso.
3. Boy uses vacuum for comb and almost decodes family cat. Dad calls him "my little shaver".
4. Would you say a fairy tale writer of long ago was a Great Dane?



Canadian company plans to mass-produce artificial human hearts

OTTAWA (AFP) — A new Canadian company said Friday it planned to begin mass production of artificial human hearts before the turn of the century.

World Heart Corporation made its announcement at a ceremony that drew leading Canadian investors and health authority officials.

The one-pound device will have a built-in wireless control that can be recharged without surgeons having to reopen the patient, company officials said. World Heart said it had bought exclusive world rights to the so-called heartsaver from the University of Ottawa Heart Institute in 1996.

Dr. Tofy Mussivand, president of World Heart, said a pilot manufacturing facility would open this summer in Ottawa with the first heartsaver expected to be produced before the end of the year.

ANSWERS PUZZLES

(A) 786. (The numbers after the word "Scotland" correspond to the letters of that word; the words "lots," "loan" and "and" are made up from the letters in "Scotland," and the numbers after them are the numbers corresponding to these letters in the original word, with 1 added to each number after "lots," 2 added after "loan," and 3 added after "and").

(B) H. (The number of letters in the alphabet which lie between successive letters in the question are 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12, and the direction alternates from forward to backward along the alphabet (i.e. from A to Z, and then from Z to A).)

Alternative explanation: Alternate letters go two steps down the alphabet and two steps up; the sequence N, L, J, leads to H as the next letters).

(C) There are 31

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Ben Nevis.
2. Norway.
3. An Indian lady of high rank.
4. Six.
5. From the mythical figure TANTALUS, who was sentenced to stand in water that he was never allowed to drink.
6. Gutenberg of Germany.
7. A Russian hot-water urn.

UNFPA releases 1997 report

'Reproductive health is a right for both men and women; the challenge is to make it right a reality'

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The United Nations Population Fund 1997 report (UNFPA), released May 28, illustrates different aspects and views concerning reproductive rights and health.

Among the issues tackled, fertility rates were mentioned as declining in much of the world, while the global population is still growing by 81 million people annually.

Fertility fell between 1980-85 and 1990-95 in a number of countries of south and central Asia and of sub-Saharan Africa. Part of this decline can be attributed to the success in meeting the need for reproductive health care, including family planning, the report said.

Nevertheless, fertility rates remain high in a number of countries. The desire to limit fertility, and with it the increased

demand for information, support and access to quality family planning services, can be expected to increase, said the report, but considerable efforts will be required to meet the reproductive health needs of the many women who wish to limit or space their pregnancies but lack responsive services.

Another factor in the reduction of the expected growth rate in the less developed regions is higher-than-expected mortality rates in countries effected by wars, such as Rwanda, Burundi and Iraq, or affected by the spread of AIDS. Death rates in eastern Africa are 25 per cent higher than they would be in the absence of AIDS, the report mentions.

The world's population in mid-1997 stands at 5.85 billion, the report shows. Growth slowed to 81 million persons per year during 1990-95, as compared to 87 million per year in the peak

growth years of 1985-90. Annual growth averaged 1.8 per cent in less developed regions, where 80 per cent of the world's people live, and 0.4 per cent elsewhere.

The global annual growth rate of 1.48 per cent for 1990-95 is significantly lower than the 1.57 per cent projected by the United Nations in 1994. This, the report said, reflects a faster-than-anticipated decline in fertility, to a current average of 2.96 children per woman, but even when fertility is declining, population growth will continue as the large numbers of people born in previous decades reach their childbearing years.

Long-range population projections are lower: the world in 2050 is expected to have between 7.7 billion and 11.1 billion people, with the most likely projection considered to be 9.4 billion — nearly half a billion less than the 1994 esti-

mate.

Whether the actual 2050 population will fall within the vast 3.4 billion range will depend largely on the action or inaction of the world's nations in the next few years. The most practical and effective population and development policy is to create an environment in which people can freely make reproductive choices and decisions, suggested the report. This implies a priority for investment in basic social services, such as education and health care. Basically it means investing in women and redressing the gender imbalance, so that women can make choices on an equal basis with men, according to the report.

This was the basis for the agreement at the International Conference on Population and Development and forms part of the Programme of Action accepted by the 180 nations attending the Cairo conference in 1994.

Global and national needs coincide with personal rights and interests, said the report; given the choice, most women would have fewer children than their parent's generation.

Enabling the women and their partners to have the right to choose has stimulated the trend towards smaller families and has helped countries to find a balance between their population and their resources. Better prospects for development, said the report, will in turn bring sexual and reproductive health rights to more people.

The State of World Population Report has several chapters which set out the legal framework for reproductive rights, examining the relationship of poor health to reproduction, addressing a number of major causes and their solutions, addressing the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents, rights

to marriage and childbearing.

Other chapters deal with sustainable development, defined by a better quality of life regardless of the gender; the last chapter points out the need to put in place information and services that meet the full range of requirements for sexual and reproductive health and to establish the broad human rights which enable sexual and reproductive rights.

This, said the report, will require public advocacy and leadership represented in efforts to ensure that the full range of high-quality reproductive health information and services are available to all women and men and especially to close the "gender gap" in education and act against poverty.

Under international human rights treaties, states are both obligated to refrain from interfering with individual freedoms and required to take active steps to promote the exercise of

rights. Rights violations can result from direct action by the state or from the states' failure to promote, protect and defend rights; therefore, clear standards are needed to define the states' minimum obligations.

According to statistics of the UNFPA 1997, in Jordan, life expectancy for men is 67.7 years, for women 71.8 years, infant mortality is 30 while maternal mortality 150 per 100,000.

The education indicators show that secondary enrolment for boys stands at 84 in 100, as compared to 91 in 100 for girls; illiterate over 15 years of age are 7 in 100 for males and 21 in 100 for women.

In another statistic for demographic, social and economic indicators, the report indicates that Jordan has a population of 4.1 million in 1997, which is expected to rise up to 11.9 million in the year 2025; that makes an average pop-

ulation growth between 1995-2000 of 3.3 per cent.

The mortality rate of people less than five years of age stands at 51 in 1,000 in males and 40 in 1,000 in females. Although nearly 60 per cent of couples are using contraceptives, up from 10-15 per cent thirty years ago, the right to reproductive health acclaimed at the 1994 Cairo conference is still far from reality in many countries, according to the UNFPA 1997 report.

A key objective of integrated reproductive health care, according to the report, is to ensure that women know their options and exercise them. "The international community has agreed repeatedly that the reproductive health is a right for both men and women," said Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director of UNFPA. "The challenge now is to make this right a reality for every individual."

Aisha Bhutta — a woman on a mission

By Sidra Khan

AISHA BHUTTA, nee Debbie Rogers, is serene. She sits on the sofa in the big front room of her tenement flat in Cowcaddens, Glasgow. The walls are hung with quotations from the Koran, a special clock to remind the family of prayer times and posters of the holy city of Mecca. Aisha's piercing blue eyes sparkle with evangelical zeal, she smiles with a radiance only true believers possess. Her face is that of the strong Scots lass — no-nonsense, good-humoured — but it is carefully covered with a hijab.

For a good Christian girl to convert to Islam and marry a Muslim is extraordinary enough. But more than that, she has also converted her parents, most of the rest of her family and at least 30 friends and neighbours.

Her family were austere Christians with whom Rogers regularly attended Salvation Army meetings. When all the other teenagers in Britain were kissing their George Michael posters goodnight, Rogers had pictures of Jesus up on her wall. And yet she found that Christianity was not enough: there were too many unanswered questions and she felt dissatisfied with the lack of a disciplined structure for her beliefs. "There had to be more for me to obey than just doing prayers when I felt like it."

Aisha had first seen her future husband, Mohammad Bhutta, when she was 10 and a regular customer at the local shop, run by his family. She would see him out the back, praying. "There was a contentment and peace in what he was doing. He said he was Muslim. I said: 'What's a Muslim?'"

Later, with his help, she

began looking deeper into Islam. By the age of 17, she had read the entire Koran in Arabic. "Everything I read," she says, "was making sense."

She made the decision to convert at 16. "When I said the words, it was like a big burden I had been carrying on my shoulders had been thrown off. I felt like a new-born baby."

Despite her conversion, however, Mohammad's parents were against their marrying. They saw her as a Western woman who would lead their eldest son astray and give the family a bad name; she was, Mohammad's father believed, "the biggest enemy."

Nevertheless, the couple married in the local mosque. Aisha wore a dress hand-sewn by Mohammad's mother and sisters, who sneaked into the ceremony against the wishes of his father, who refused to attend.

It was his elderly grandmother who paved the way for a bond between the women. She arrived from Pakistan, where mixed-race marriages are even more taboo, and insisted on meeting Aisha. She was so impressed by the fact that she had learned the Koran and Punjabi that she convinced the others; slowly, Aisha, now 32, became one of the family.

Aisha's parents, Michael and Marjory Rogers, though they did attend the wedding, were more concerned with the clothes their daughter was now wearing (the traditional shalwar kameez) and what the neighbours would think. Six years later, Aisha embarked on a mission to convert them and the rest of her family, bar her sister ("I'm still working on her"). "My husband and I worked on my mum and dad, telling them about Islam, and they saw the

changes in me, like I stopped answering back!"

Her mother soon followed in her footsteps. Marjory Rogers changed her name to Summayyah and became a devout Muslim. "She wore the hijab and did her prayers on time and nothing ever mattered to her except her connection with God."

Aisha's father proved a more difficult recruit, so she enlisted the help of her newly converted mother (who has since died of cancer). "My mum and I used to talk to my father about Islam and we were sitting on the sofa in the kitchen one day and he said: 'What are the words you say when you want to become a Muslim?' Me and my mum just jumped on top of him."

Three years later, Aisha's brother converted "over the telephone — thanks to BT," then his wife and children, followed by her sister's son. It didn't stop there. Her family converted. Aisha turned her attention to Cowcaddens, with its tightly packed rows of crumbling, grey tenement flats. Every Monday evening for the past 13 years, Aisha has held classes in Islam for Scottish women. So far, she's helped to convert over 30.

The women come from a bewildering array of backgrounds. Trudy, a lecturer at the University of Glasgow and a former Catholic, attended Aisha's classes purely because she was commissioned to carry out some research. But after six months of classes, she converted, deciding that Christianity was riddled with "logical inconsistencies." Unlike Aisha, Trudy has chosen not to wear the hijab, believing it to be a masculine interpretation of the Koran. Her family do not know that she has converted.

"I could tell she was beginning to be affected by

the talks," Aisha says. How could she tell? "I don't know, it was just a feeling."

The classes include Muslim girls tempted by Western ideals and needing salvation, practising Muslim women who want an open forum for discussion denied them at the local male-dominated mosque, and those simply interested in Islam. Aisha welcomes questions. "We cannot expect people blindly to believe."

Her husband, Mohammad Bhutta, now 41, does not seem so driven to convert Scottish lads to Muslim brothers. He occasionally helps out in the family restaurant, but his main aim in life is to ensure the couple's five children grow up as Muslims. The eldest, Safia, "nearly 14, al-humdu lilla (Praise be to God!)," is not averse to a spot of recruiting herself. One day she met a woman in the street and carried her shopping. At her invitation, the woman attended Aisha's classes and is now a Muslim.

"I can honestly say I have never regretted it," Aisha says of her conversion to Islam. "Every marriage has its ups and downs and sometimes you need something to pull you out of any hardship. But the Prophet, Peace be upon Him, said: 'Every hardship has an ease.' So when you're going through a difficult stage, you work for the ease to come." Mohammad is more romantic: "I feel we have known each other for centuries and must never part from one another. According to Islam, you are not just partners for life, you can be partners in heaven as well, for ever. It's a beautiful thing, you know."

The Guardian



Aisha Bhutta amidst some of her family members

Fatchett: U.K. to continue assistance to Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

first visit by a member of Tony Blair's government to the region.

He told reporters that the British Prime Minister will discuss the Middle East with U.S. President Bill Clinton during their meeting in London this week.

Mr. Fatchett said that his government will not soften the previous position of the ousted Conservative government against Iraq and will be committed to the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

"We hold exactly the

same position as the previous administration of the United Kingdom. It has never been our intention to inflict hardships upon the people of Iraq. That is not the policy objective. The policy objective is to ensure that the regime in Iraq meets the criteria of the United Nations Security Council resolutions," he said.

"There will be no softening of the position under the new Labour government. That is not our intention. There is a very strong consensus about the way that we should handle Sad-

dam Hussein and his regime," Mr. Fatchett said.

"I have seen in my constituency many people who have come over as refugees from Iraq and I know how that regime treats its political opponents, how he treats so-called dissidents. I find that wholly unacceptable, and therefore I have no difficulty in supporting the United Nations resolutions," he added.

Mr. Fatchett criticised the Turkish incursion in northern Iraq and called for a peace dialogue to solve the differences

between the Turkish government and Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

"We feel that the incursion has to be commensurate to the risk facing Turkey. We urge caution and we made it clear that the best long range solution, as always, is dialogue and a political compromise," he said.

Mr. Fatchett, who left for Syria, said his country, which hosts many Arab political asylum seekers, considers human rights a priority to the Labour government and there will be no compromise in human

rights violation by some Gulf Arab states.

"We will not turn a blind eye on occasions because it may be convenient to do so. We are not foolish enough to not recognise the fact that this will face us with some very tough decisions that have to be made. We have already spoken privately on our concerns on human rights.... We will not run away from our concern about the human rights agenda and we will continue to raise those issues," he said.

Israeli cabinet discusses final status proposals

(Continued from page 1)

broad autonomy in a smaller area for a demilitarised Palestinian entity which would have to share control over its water resources and air space with the Jewish state.

Earlier this month the Israeli newspaper Maariv reported that Mr. Netanyahu's final status plan holds that 50 per cent of the West Bank is "vital" to Israel's security and

cannot be handed over to Palestinian rule.

Areas he proposes be annexed to Israel included the country's entire border with Jordan, a buffer zone surrounding the West Bank, large settlement blocs, strategic roadways and a ring of land around occupied Jerusalem, the report said.

Under the 1995 interim agreement, the Palestinians have full control over only eight West Bank

towns, about three per cent of the territory.

The PNA also has civil administration powers in about 25 per cent of the West Bank where Israel's army remains present.

Israel is required to carry out three more troop withdrawals from West Bank rural areas before the conclusion of final status negotiations, but it claims the extent of the pullbacks is its decision alone.

Government plans to cancel customs on industrial inputs

AMMAN (J.T.) — Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs Jawad Anani and Industry, Trade and Supply Minister Hani Mulki met Wednesday with Nazmi Al Abdullah, the director general of the Customs Department, and other officials and discussed with them means to abolish or sharply reduce customs duties on industrial inputs. They reportedly considered levying a value added tax (VAT) to generate substitute revenue for the government coffers.

Ali Dajani, advisor to the Chamber of Industry told the Jordan Times that industrialists would welcome any decision which would fulfil "consistent demands by the

Amman Chamber of Industry for all inputs required by Jordanian industries to be exempted from customs duty."

"This would enable the local industry to not only meet the competition from foreign imports but also be able to get a foothold in foreign markets at competitive prices" he said.

The Jordanian industrial sector is at present facing difficulty competing with the imports from the countries which have no duties on import of raw materials and intermediate goods or which grant special facilities and incentives to their export-oriented industries said Mr. Dajani.

Israeli industrialist predicts severe downturn in economy

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel's economy is a "snowball speeding down a steep hill," with unemployment likely to reach 10 per cent by next year, Israel's leading industrialist said Wednesday.

Dan Proper, president of the Israel Manufacturers Association and head of numerous economic forums, said there has been a significant drop in exports and investment in Israel's hi-tech industry.

"Low investment in industry means that Israel's reputation in world technology, which was achieved with great sweat, is being eroded," Mr. Proper said.

Mr. Proper mainly blamed the high interest rate policy of Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, and demanded that Dr. Frenkel be replaced by a board of academics.

"There is no other institution in the country with such an absolute dictatorship — one man decides and no one can appeal," Mr. Proper said.

Mr. Proper dismissed Dr.

Frenkel's argument that high interest rates were necessary to keep inflation in check. "Anyone who claims he can lower inflation to two to three per cent by the year 2000 is fooling the public. It is impossible to lower inflation below six per cent under the present conditions," Mr. Proper said.

Mr. Proper said interest rates should be lowered by one per cent immediately, and the value added tax be increased from 17 per cent to 18 per cent.

Unemployment in Israel is currently 6.7 per cent — surprisingly low considering that Israel has absorbed some 800,000 immigrants in less than a decade. Israel has a population of 5.6 million.

Mr. Proper warned that unemployment would rise to as much as 10 per cent by the end of 1998.

"This will mean a severe blow to the weaker levels of society. We are, to my sorrow, already starting to lay-off some of the new immigrant workers employed in recent years," he said.

UNCTAD: Direct foreign investment in Africa is low

GENEVA (AFP) — Direct foreign investment in Africa amounted to \$4.5 billion in 1996, representing 4.8 per cent of the formation of capital and 10.0 per cent of gross domestic product, data from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has showed.

Overall foreign direct investment in Africa remained weak and this was "worrying," UNCTAD said.

Between 1991 and 1995 Africa had attracted only 5.0 per cent of total such investment in developing countries, and 2.0 per cent of the total throughout the world.

Most of the investment was concentrated in a few countries: Nigeria and Egypt had accounted for more than half of the total.

Morocco had been the third main recipient during the five-year period, accounting for \$500 million.

The least-developed African countries had received only 20 per cent

of such investment in Africa during the last 20 years.

Two thirds of this had gone to the oil industry in Angola and to investment in shipping under Liberia's flag of convenience.

Most of the investment had come from French and British companies. The rest had come from the United States.

But countries in South East Asia were showing growing interest in Africa, UNCTAD said.

In 1996, the Malaysian state company Petronas had invested \$436 million in a refinery in South Africa and Telekom Malaysia, allied with SBC International of the United States, had taken 30 per cent of the telecommunications company in South Africa, UNCTAD said.

Investment was no longer concentrated on primary industries, except in Botswana and Zimbabwe, but was being channelled increasingly into processing and manufacturing.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	SEK	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.7080	0.6127	1.4217	116.83	1.3828	181.82	1.9180	6.7540
DE Mark	0.5885	-	0.3391	0.8336	68.40	0.8107	985.71	1.1248	3.3742
GB Sterling	1.6320	2.7833	-	2.3064	190.40	2.2567	2744.40	3.1302	9.3905
CH Franc	0.7034	1.1982	0.4307	-	82.01	0.8725	1182.41	134.94	4.0470
JP Yen	0.0086	1.4613	0.5248	1.2185	-	1.1851	14.41	164.38	4.9314
CA Dollar	0.7232	1.2327	0.4447	1.0282	1.19	-	1214.82	1.3862	4.1603
IT Lira	0.0000	1.0135	0.3640	0.8845	1443.83	0.8210	-	11.40	3.4204
NL Guilder	0.3314	58.85	0.3191	74.08	80.78	0.7205	878.30	-	2.8984
FR Franc	0.1738	0.2963	0.1064	24.6989	20.24	0.2403	33.32	33.3200	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7505	0.3768	3.6402	0.3021	3.6728	1537.50	3.3895
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2973	0.5322	5.1415	0.4267	5.1876	2171.81	4.7874
GB Sterling	0.2656	0.1588	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0805	0.98	408.95	0.9037
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8789	9.9530	-	9.86	0.3017	9.75	4080.20	4.9949
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.5303	1.0303	-	0.0830	1.01	422.37	0.9311
Kuwait Dinar	3.3102	2.3438	12.4148	1.2473	12.00	-	12.10	6089.57	0.9311
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0212	0.1026	0.9911	0.0823	-	418.62	0.9229
Lebanese P1000	0.65	0.4608	2.4393	0.2451	2.3678	0.1985	2.3888	-	2.2045
Egyptian	0.2350	0.2080	1.1065	0.1112	1.0740	0.0891	1.0836	453.51	-

Energy									
Oil	Case	Service							
Brent	19.75	20.50							
WTI	20.80	21.20							
Bonny	19.75	20.50							
Dubai	18.90	18.95							
UL Gas	204.80	208.00							

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	344	344.5							
Silver (oz's)	4.75	4.77							
Platinum (oz's)	401	402							
AL (3 Months)	1633	1634							
CU (3 Months)	2502	2505							
Zinc (3 Months)	0	0							
Lead (3 Months)	032	037							
Ni (3 Months)	7290	7310							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	% Chng		
New York	DOW JONES	7359.92	14.01	0.10	7393.3	7302.23	7745.91		
New York	S&P 500	947.51	0.48	0.06	951.52	940.96	947.03		
London	FT-SE 100	4681.8	19.8	0.42	4692.4	4661.2	4681.8		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	19889.89	-153.61	-0.77	20149	19848.4	20043.5		
Paris	CAC 40	2680.34	25.6	0.96	2681.03	2632.97	2654.74		
Frankfurt	DAX	3674.36	16.5	0.45	3678.49	3664.38	3657.86		

Energy									
Commodity	Case	Service	Spot	Delivery					
Coffee (c/b's)	0	0	Spot	Spot					
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1479	1479	Spot	Spot					
Sugar (\$/ton)	326.9	326.9	Spot	Spot					
Wheat (\$/ton)	162.5	162.5	Spot	Spot					
Soya (c/b's)	23.07	23.07	Spot	Spot					
Tea (c/b's/kg)	135	135	Spot	Spot					
Barley (\$/bush)	0	0	Spot	Spot					
Rice (\$/ton)	480	480	Spot	Spot					

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Earnest request
- 5 Cinema
- 9 Celestian
- 14 Macho guys
- 15 Funtily guy
- 16 Rust, for example
- 17 Two, at times
- 19 Percussion instruments
- 20 Knockout count
- 21 To boot
- 22 Sponges
- 23 Motorcycle marathon
- 25 Gandhi associate
- 27 Allows
- 29 Easy mark
- 33 Checked pattern
- 37 Ivy Leaguer
- 38 "Lohengrin" lass
- 39 Leather-working tool
- 40 Court order
- 41 Oppenheimer's org.
- 42 Voice of authority
- 46 Infantryman
- 48 Box a bit
- 49 Earth tone
- 51 Puzzler
- 55 Usurers
- 58 Yikes!
- 60 Augsburg article
- 61 English philosopher
- 62 Sign of aging
- 64 Less apparent
- 65 Phone part
- 66 Solicit insistently
- 67 Feats
- 68 Matched collections
- 69 —do well

by Jay Sullivan

7 King of Thebes

8 Madison Ave. output

9 "The Rake's Progress" lithographer

10 Pentateuch part

11 Chinese porcelain

12 Slide

13 It's a loch

14 Like an otary

22 Conversation

24 Forearm feature

26 Schools: Fr.

28 Rubberneck

30 Pizarro's conquest

31 Got off

32 Accompanying

33 Fore close?

34 Dairy case item

35 Maritime org.

36 Cries of pain

40 Utterance

42 Programming junkies

43 Noted publisher

44 Spreads out

45 Household help

47 Bifurcated

50 Macabre

52 Farm equipment name

53 Feudal sovereign

54 Go in

55 Hit the dirt

56 Fine-tune

57 Skin woe

59 Lecher

62 DJ's disks

63 Enjoyment

Thursday's Puzzle solved:

GOOD	STLO	TRAMP
RANI	ARIA	AERTIE
ITON	BUNT	SMOKE
THROW	INTHETOWEL	
SANK	LER	
CLEAR	SOOT	ASEA
REMUS	ROOM	USC
OVERAND	DOWNWITH	
FEN	WIRE	RENEE
TEDS	GYRO	GAGES
ASH	DEER	
THEFAT	LADYSINGS	
RAVEL	ESME	EINE
ADELE	STAR	SLUR
MARYS	SANS	TEST

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BOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get out to parties, or just go visiting with your loved ones today, and see as many old friends as possible. Bring along some small meaningful gifts which will be appreciated by the recipient and show him or her of your kindness.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take some time today to do something of a community-oriented nature which will benefit others, and also make you feel good about yourself. Later this evening will be good to go out with your mate to a romantic spot.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure you don't neglect contacting loved ones and close friends today who are at a distance from you. Visit those later this evening who are lonely, and bring a present which will be very much appreciated.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Give much thought and time to the one you love today, and don't be afraid to speak your feelings openly to this person. Later this evening will be good for you to seek out fellow associates and get their support on a project.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) An invitation may be extended to you today for some special function which you should accept, so as not to offend the sender. You should try to patch things up with someone you have recently had a disagreement.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make this day today for genuine and pure happiness and show good will toward everyone you meet, especially those who seem sad. Tonight will be good for you to stay home with loved ones and relax for the days ahead.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) You can have much happiness with your loved ones today. This is a good time to rediscover your youth by paying special attention to youngsters within your residence. Make an effort to seek out a bigwig for advice.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Stay at home with your loved ones today and enjoy the harmony and warmth there. Invite some friends in later this evening and everyone can have an enjoyable time. It would not be a good idea to go out to restaurants.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Make sure you take the time today to contact all the friends and relatives who may be expecting to hear from you. Later this evening be kind and understanding towards those who you feel are in a difficult mood.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Although this is a day today to have a wonderful time, don't neglect to consider events in the days ahead. The world is your oyster later this evening and it should be enjoyed by those who are important in your life.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is a fine day today to be gregarious and to see as many friends and loved ones as you can. Group activities will be fun, especially if they are spent with close friends who don't have anyone they can count on.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be with the one you love today get into the spirit of relaxing for the days ahead. Entertain some fascinating friends and favourite loved ones whom you wish to see at recreational activities which will be fun.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MAY 30, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Handle important obligations today, and don't allow some personal concern to upset your schedule. If you mate complaints, stay calm and everything will be peaceful if you allow him or her to be left alone.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You should not expect any favours of others today, as they have affairs of their own to handle. Try to be more responsible and self-reliant in handling of career activities and you will gain recognition of a bigwig.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) There may be much confusion around you today, however maintain your poise and you can handle any difficulties which develop. You can be diplomatic and objective later this evening with fellow associates.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A new situation will attract you today, however study every phase of it before becoming involved and you can defuse any difficulties. You will meet a helpful person, who is knowledgeable and understanding towards your situation.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) There could be an error in some obligation you have assumed today, so do your best to resolve it. Listen carefully to your mate's desires so that you can be sympathetic and understanding towards his or her difficulties.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Having a discussion with a fellow associate will do little good at this time, since your ideas differ greatly, so you should wait until there is a meeting of the minds. You can go involved in any public matters later this evening.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) With the assistance of friends today, try to iron out any difficulties in your present situation. Make notes later this evening of requests for assistance from your fellow associates who wish to speak their minds.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make sure you know the cost of a pleasure today before getting into it or you could find yourself short of funds when it really counts. Don't take a chance on going and later this evening without enough money for a contingency.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Study the situation at home today of any difficulties and be sure you know what is really going on there. You should not try to pull a fast one on a family friend or you could lose any respect earned with him or her.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Check into any travel and communication matters today, and improve your plans if possible. You may have to rely later this evening on close friends for assistance, so don't hesitate to make inquiries.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study every aspect of your financial affairs today before you reach any definite decisions. You should not rely on advice from your usual sources, since there have been conditions present which question

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Arab Centre for Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals Company boosts profit by 37% despite lower sales

**** HAVING POSTED** a net profit of JD359,000 in 1996, the general assembly of the Arab Centre for Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals Company has approved distributing JD350,000 in cash dividends at a rate of seven per cent.

Board Chairman Wasef Azar told the general assembly that despite difficult conditions and the total closure of the Iraqi market which is considered the main market for the company's products, the Arab Centre for Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals was able to double its sales to other outside markets. He said the company focused on the Yemeni and the UAE (United Arab Emirates) markets in addition to the local market and succeeded in boosting profit by 37 per cent in 1996 over the 1995 profit despite a reduction in sales by about JD681,000. Mr. Azar also attributed the higher profit to lower expenditures.

According to the annual report, the company's gelatin capsules plant registered JD1.49 million in total sales, 17.65 per cent lower than the 1995 sales of JD1.80 million. Mr. Azar attributed the decline to lower demand from the local market where sales dropped from JD1.09 million in 1995 to JD0.67 million in 1996.

The company strived to market the gelatin capsules in the Syrian market despite stiff competition from international firms, Mr. Azar pointed out. He indicated that the Arab Centre has also started to market the capsules in Egypt. As such, the company's sales of capsules in outside markets amounted to JD0.81 million (JD0.72 million in 1995). In terms of operational profit, the company's capsules plant generated JD0.56 million while the pharmaceutical plant generated JD0.49 million.

The pharmaceutical sales totalled JD1.60 million last year, 18.4 per cent less than the JD1.97 million sales in 1995 due to the drop in exports.

Local sales registered an increase of 18.3 per cent as they jumped from JD1.13 million in 1995 to JD1.34 million in 1996. Exports accounted for 16.3 per cent of the pharmaceutical sales last year compared to 42.2 per cent in the previous year.

The balance sheet at the end of December 1996 showed total assets at JD7.49 million and total shareholders equity at JD6.28 million (Al Aswaq & Al Ra'i).



Anani (centre) addresses Arab businessmen

Anani: Arab investments in Jordan may top \$500m in '97

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Deputy Prime Minister for Development Jawad Anani told a large gathering of Arab businesspersons Wednesday that it was necessary to adopt open market policies to ensure the flow of goods between Arab states.

He stressed that "political differences should not have negative impacts on joint economic projects by Arab businessmen."

He said that Arab foreign trade amounts to \$300 billion, "where oil and gas constitute 40 per cent, and inter-Arab trade amounts to 8.3 per cent."

But he said the general

trend shows that inter-Arab trade is increasing relatively and that among the major reasons for the rise is "the increase in joint Arab investments, especially in Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon and Jordan."

Dr. Anani said the second reason behind the increase was the easing of customs duties between

some Arab countries. He explained that these countries decreased the customs rates as a part of its efforts to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and enter partnership accords with the European Union.

"Therefore the gate was opened to Arab goods to flow among Arab countries," Dr. Anani said.

Addressing around 120 businessmen attending the Jordan Industries Fair at the Chamber of Industry, Dr. Anani said: "We in Jordan have undergone a long journey to attract Arab investments... we are ready to attract Arab investments, whether on trade, industry, banking or bonds sectors. We are open to all sorts of investments by Arab investors."

The minister said that foreign investment has increased in the Kingdom and added that Arab investment in Jordan could reach more than \$500 million this year.



Arab businessmen attending the meeting

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JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET									
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TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179									
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 25/05/1997									
DATE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OFFER	CLOSE
1997	1996				SHARES	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE
269.000	213.000	ARAB BANK	11.8	1.57	3	50	15340	296.00	355.50
2.100	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	5	0.00	196	236515	48755	1.95	2.06
5.300	4.100	QATIA ARAB BANK	11.4	2.13	2	484	13461	5.20	5.30
3.600	2.760	BANK OF JORDAN	5.3	0.00	7	4268	13461	2.05	2.10
1.210	0.880	MID-EAST TRV. BK.	57.0	0.00	12	7850	7992	1.02	1.02
2.480	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.1	0.00	2	7850	1640	2.18	2.18
5.100	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	14.7	3.94	24	7350	36072	4.85	4.92
2.350	2.440	JOR. TRAVEL BANK	8.1	0.00	28	9923	27662	2.66	2.72
1.050	0.790	JOR. GULF BANK	4.7	8.86	8	7284	5743	1.79	1.79
4.050	2.460	JOR. ISLAND BANK	15.5	3.16	20	8300	31434	3.27	3.50
2.000	1.220	UNION BK. DEV.	7	0.00	7	2850	3623	3.18	3.18
3.800	3.000	JOR. INV. FVN. BANK	20.4	0.00	3	1050	3330	3.17	3.17
2.850	1.000	SEIT AL-HAL (SEITRA)	8	12.00	1	654	814	1.39	1.39
1.440	1.000	PELLEL. TRV. BK.	9	0.00	1	100	112	1.12	1.12
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 195.39 ICMI: +0.43									
2.200	1.870	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.1	5.49	3	2000	1800	3.82	3.82
6.170	3.700	ALFAR AL-ARABI	11.2	0.00	1	2000	1120	5.41	5.60
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 114.11 ICMI: +0.47									
1.820	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.3	5.81	24	28945	49362	1.68	1.72
9.250	7.800	JOR. HOTEL TOURISM	12.6	1.38	1	800	4000	8.00	8.00
1.540	1.700	LIBRO ALFATECH	6.6	0.00	2	300	428	1.35	1.45
7.800	6.000	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	7.8	4.90	1	300	356	2.00	1.97
5.700	4.100	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	18.3	2.36	1	350	2086	5.89	5.96
1.470	0.900	HATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	96	78000	9166	1.23	1.25
2.120	1.470	HATL. EAST HOTELS	19.5	0.00	9	2600	3332	1.29	1.28
3.720	2.900	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	7.8	0.00	6	1600	4800	3.00	3.00
1.220	0.950	PARA EDUCATION	9	0.00	2	7050	9009	1.89	1.89
2.230	1.630	UNIFIED CO.	8.0	6.51	11	4500	7595	1.67	1.69
1.080	0.550	UNION BANK DEV.	9	0.00	1	250	302	1.65	1.65
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 112.52 ICMI: +1.97									
4.010	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	27.5	2.69	109	146707	559556	4.01	4.09
2.580	2.710	JOR. TRUCKING	10.4	0.00	42	48580	121879	3.58	3.75
6.700	4.950	ARAB PORTIN CO.	15.3	3.04	27	8900	58964	6.59	6.58
10.400	7.150	JOR. PETROLEUM	9.2	9.36	11	3080	29246	9.34	9.50
3.260	1.650	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	9	0.00	8	346	581	2.00	1.97
7.300	6.420	JOR. PETROLEUM	10.7	2.02	9	2350	15487	6.60	6.62
3.750	3.000	ARAB PETROLEUM	11.7	5.63	3	30300	37620	7.72	7.74
2.070	1.290	JOR. PETROLEUM	17.4	5.71	1	230	350	1.30	1.40
3.600	2.750	JOR. PETROLEUM	15.5	0.00	1	300	275	2.75	2.75
2.930	2.100	GENERAL TRADING	8	0.00	1	300	430	1.30	1.30
5.750	4.250	QAR ALHAMA TRV. INV.	11.2	4.97	22	3970	19791	4.83	5.03
4.710	3.120	QAR ALHAMA TRV. INV.	7.2	8.17	6	1300	4086	3.22	3.06
960	450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	11.0	0.00	26	42000	16323	1.51	1.52
1.310	1.020	ARAB PAPER CORP.	31.8	0.00	3	1600	1664	1.04	1.04
1.340	0.600	POLYMER TRV.	9	0.00	26	14500	7885	1.50	1.50
1.840	0.700	INTERMED. PETRO. CORP.	9	0.00	6	1500	1062	1.70	1.72
1.340	0.600	POLYMER TRV.	9	0.00	1	150	153	1.53	1.53
3.730	2.130	HATL. CHALE MIRE, HATC	45.1	0.00	9	2850	7999	2.68	2.81
1.170	0.570	JOR. TRUCKING	9	0.00	6	2150	1733	1.61	1.63
1.170	1.120	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	19.0	4.75	40	17524	35477	1.62	1.60
2.610	1.410	UNIV. HOD. TRV.	15.3	1.18	21	3400	4977	1.48	1.46
1.680	1.120	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	15.3	8.71	8	2450	2807	1.13	1.11
1.610	1.300	HATL. CHOLESTEROL	11.8	4.79	4	2250	3265	1.42	1.46
1.230	0.840	JOR. PETRO. CORP.	15.8	0.00	17	7100	6126	1.86	1.86
2.090	1.370	JOR. PETRO. CORP.	15.8	0.00	17	7100	6126	1.86	1.86
1.330	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	8.3	0.00	29	26300	30060	1.13	1.15
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 116.55 ICMI: +1.17									
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 158.92 ICMI: +0.82									
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 25/05/1997									
0.640	0.370	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	11.6	0.00	96	250	100	0.39	0.40
0.750	0.410	JOR. TRUCKING	10.4	0.00	42	26070	13075	3.49	3.58
1.350	1.050	QAR ALHAMA TRV. INV.	49.8	0.00	41	17750	16553	1.24	1.29
0.800	0.370	ARAB TRV. HOTELS	18.3	0.00	1	1000	800	0.76	0.75
0.950	0.730	AL-SHARQ INV. TRV.	8	0.00	1	40000	19000	0.40	0.40
0.640	0.370	JOR. TRUCKING	10.4	0.00	1	1000	230	0.24	0.23
0.730	0.510	ARAB PETRO. CORP.	15.8	0.00	8	7000	3730	0.55	0.53
0.720	0.480	HATL. CHOLESTEROL	11.8	0.00	1	1000	180	0.40	0.40
0.790	0.400	HATL. CHOLESTEROL	11.8	0.00	30	19933	114654	0.57	0.56
1.000	0.500	READY MIX CONCRETE	11.1	0.00	1	1000	370	1.00	1.00
0.960	0.710	JORDAN STEEL	32.6	6.94	19	28500	18024	0.71	0.72
1.880	0.880	UNION TRUCKING TRV.	21.9	0.00	1	3500	1209	0.87	0.87
0.610	0.390	JOR. TRUCKING	10.4	0.00	12	9750	4095	0.42	0.42
0.820	0.590	HATL. CHOLESTEROL	11.8	0.00	8	5250	4250	0.69	0.68
1.000	0.500	HATL. CHOLESTEROL	11.8	0.00	8	10100	6082	0.66	0.64
0.870	0.530	HATL. CHOLESTEROL	11.8	0.00	17	12150	8020	0.87	0.86
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 158.92 ICMI: +0.82									

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

EDGUF
GYDUP
ROPPEH
SUFULE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

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Utah one win from finals after Game 5 victory

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — Karl Malone scored 29 points and pulled down 14 rebounds to lead the Utah Jazz within one win of their first trip to the NBA finals with a 96-91 victory over the Houston Rockets on Tuesday.

The Jazz lead the best-of-seven Western Conference finals three games to two and can play for the championship for the first time in the 23-year history of the franchise with a win in game six at Houston on Thursday.

John Stockton overcame foul trouble to score 17 points for the Jazz, who improved to 8-0 at home in the post-season.

The home team has won all five games in the series but Houston must win at home Thursday and game seven on the road to earn a return to the finals. The Rockets were NBA champions in 1994 and 1995.

"We do have a different team than we had when we had championships," Rockets coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "But every task that we have faced so far, I felt that when (we were) really backed into the corner, we responded."

Malone bounced back from a bad shooting performance in Utah's game four loss, and in the marquee matchup of the series, he held Charles Barkley to just 10 points.

"Karl stepped up tonight and played really well," Stockton said.

In the second half, Malone outscored Barkley 19-4, holding him to one point in the fourth quarter.

Malone, who was named the league's Most Valuable Player this season, and Stockton combined for 14 points in the final 10 minutes as Utah held off several Houston rallies.

Hakeem Olajuwon scored 33 points and Clyde Drexler added 15 for the Rockets.

"You're not going to stop Olajuwon," Jazz coach Jerry Sloan said. "I haven't seen anybody do it yet and we certainly aren't going to."

The Rockets lost the lead midway through the second quarter and never regained it, falling behind 47-44 at halftime.

The Rockets trailed by seven points entering the final period and pulled no



Utah guard John Stockton (R) shoots past Houston forward Charles Barkley, during their second half action in Game 5 of the NBA Western Conference Finals. Stockton scored 17 points in Utah's 96-91 victory over Houston (Reuters photo)

closer than five in the final eight minutes.

Bryon Russell scored 13 points, Jeff Hornacek added 11 and Antoine Carr and Howard Eisley added 10 apiece off the bench for the Jazz, who shot 49 percent (34-of-69) from the field and made 25-of-28 free throws.

Matt Maloney made four three-pointers and scored 14 points for the Rockets, who shot 45 percent (30-of-67), including 7-of-24 from behind the arc.

"They made some runs and we hung in there," Maloney said. "We just didn't get over that bump

and come back. We were just one more run away. They made some big shots."

After scoring 10 points on 4-of-11 shooting in the first half, Malone came alive in the third quarter, scoring 11 points and picking up the slack for Stockton, who drew his fourth foul with 5:50 left and went to the bench.

"It is always tough to sit on the sideline and watch when it is an important game," Stockton said.

A three-pointer by Houston's Sedale Threatt cut the deficit to 73-70

with 9:57 remaining, but Malone answered with a basket.

Olajuwon hit a jumper, but Stockton made a foul-line jumper and a pair of free throws to boost Utah's lead back to seven at 79-72 with 8:37 to play.

A layup by Stockton gave Utah its largest lead at 87-78 with 5:40 left, but Houston got within five at 92-87 before Hornacek banked in a tough drive to give the Jazz a 94-87 lead with 2:06 remaining.

"They really didn't score much down the stretch. We just couldn't score," Barkley said.

Cards overcome Rockies as Giants beat Astros

DENVER (R) — Cardinals starter Andy Benes made up for a shaky performance on the mound with his bat to record his first win of the month as St. Louis beat the Colorado Rockies 8-6 on Tuesday.

Benes (4-4), whose last win was five starts ago on April 30, allowed five runs and 11 hits in six innings. But he doubled and scored in the second and singled home two runs in the fourth as St. Louis opened a 6-0 lead.

"I'm not going to have many days at the plate like this," Benes said after the Cardinals won at Coors field for the first time since August of 1995 — a string of seven losses.

Ray Lankford hit a two-run homer in the first off Rockies starter John Thomson (0-4), who allowed six runs and eight hits in four innings.

Trailing 6-0, Colorado got back into the game with a four-run fourth inning.

Larry Walker, who had three hits and an RBI to extend his hitting streak to 15 games, tripled home Quinton McCracken in the sixth to make it 6-5 as the Rockies battled back.

But RBI singles by John Mabry and Gary Gaetti in the seventh extended the Cardinals' lead to 8-5.

In San Diego, Kenny Lofton scooped a fifth-inning tie with a three-run, inside-the-park homer as the Atlanta Braves pounded the Padres 9-2. With San Diego holding a 2-1 lead, Atlanta scored four runs in the fifth off starter Joey Hamillioo (3-2).

Atlanta tied it on Mark Lemke's RBI double. Lofton later lined a shot down the left-field line that bounced into the Padres' bullpen easily scoring Lemke and Jeff Blauser. Lofton rounded the bases while left fielder Greg Vaughn believed a ground-rule double should've been called.

Fred McGriff's solo homer gave Atlanta its first run.

In San Francisco, Stan Javier's one-out single in the bottom of the 10th inning scored Barry Bonds with the winning run as the Giants nipped the Houston Astros 5-4.

Bonds led off the 10th with a double against Billy Wagner (2-2), and after Mark Lewis was hit by a pitch, Javier bounced a groundball in the hole between shortstop and third base.

Ricky Gutierrez got a glove on the ball, which rolled into short left field and bonds scored easily.

Javier had three hits and three RBI for the Giants, who also got a solo homer from Jeff Kent in the fifth.

Rod Beck (3-2) got the win by tossing a scoreless 10th. In Pittsburgh, Jeremi Gonzalez struck out six over 5 1/3 innings in his Major-League debut and Brant Brown hit a three-run homer as the Chicago Cubs survived a late rally to edge the Pirates 8-7. Gonzalez (1-0) allowed three runs and six hits with three walks to notch the win after being called up from the minors before the game.

The Pirates rallied for three runs in the ninth on an RBI triple by Tony Womack and a two-run double by Kevin Young, who also hit a solo homer in the first. But Terry Adams fanned Midre Cuomings with the tying run on third to end the threat. In Cincinnati, Curt Schilling scattered seven hits in his third complete game of the season and Rico Brogna snapped a fourth-inning tie with a solo homer as the Philadelphia Phillies edged the Reds 2-1.

Schilling (7-4) won for the fourth time in five starts, allowing one run with a walk and 11 strikeouts. He gave up a leadoff triple to Deion Sanders in the third and retired the next 15 batters before Joe Oliver's single in the eighth. Brogna belted a 2-1 pitch from rookie starter Brett Tomko (0-1) over the right-field fence with one out in the fourth, giving Philadelphia a 2-1 lead.

In Montreal, Anthony Telford allowed one hit over 2 2/3 innings of relief and F.P. Santangelo's sacrifice fly capped a three-run fifth as the Expos rallied for a 5-4 victory over the New York Mets.

The Expos bullpen surrendered just two hits over 4 2/3 scoreless frames after the Mets knocked starter Carlos Perez out in the fifth. Perez was tagged for four runs and five hits before giving way to Marc Valdes (2-2).

Moorthead rallied from a 4-2 deficit in the fifth on a lead-off homer by Darrin Fletcher, an RBI single by Doug Strange and Santangelo's sac fly.

In Los Angeles, Jim Eisenreich's bases-loaded triple highlighted a four-run first inning and four relievers allowed just two hits over the final four frames as the Florida Marlins beat the Dodgers 8-5.

The Marlins loaded the bases in the first against starter Hideo Nomo (5-4) before Eisenreich laced a 2-0 pitch into the right-field corner, clearing the bases. Eisenreich scored on Bobby Bonilla's single to center field to make it 4-0.

Florida starter Al Leiter (5-4) got the win, despite getting tagged for five runs and five hits in five innings. Nomo surrendered six runs and nine hits in four innings.

Belle grand slam leads White Sox past Indians

CHICAGO (R) — Albert Belle extended his hitting streak to 22 games with a Grand Slam against his former club as the Chicago White Sox cooled off the Cleveland Indians with an 8-2 victory on Tuesday.

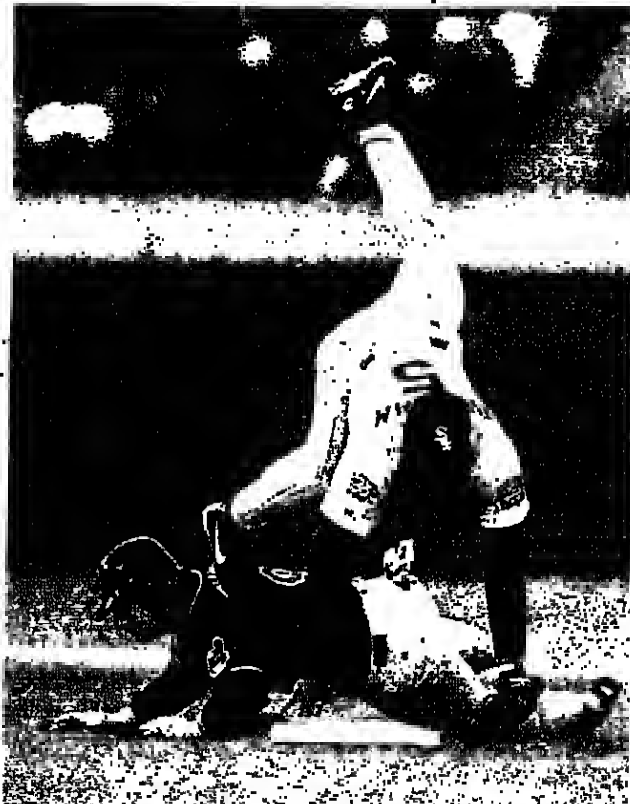
Belle connected off starter Albie Lopez (2-3) to cap a six-run fourth inning. It was the ninth career Grand Slam for Belle and second of the season.

Chicago was already up 4-0 when Cleveland intentionally walked slugger Frank Thomas to load the bases. But Belle crossed up the strategy by hitting a 1-0 pitch over the right-field fence for his 10th homer of the season.

In Boston, Mike Stanley's pinch-hit single in the bottom of the seventh inning scored Darro Bragg with the go-ahead run as the Red Sox edged the Milwaukee Brewers 7-6.

In Detroit, Justin Thompson allowed two hits over seven shutout innings as the Tigers scored a 6-2 win over the Anaheim Angels.

Thompson (5-3) struck out six and walked three in winning for the third time in his last four decisions. He extended his scoreless streak to 14 consecutive innings.



Chicago White Sox second baseman Ray Durham jumps over Cleveland Indians' baserunner Matt Williams as he attempts to break up a double play on a ball hit by teammate Dave Justice (Reuters photo)

Travis Fryman staked Detroit to a 1-0 lead with a solo homer in the third as the Tigers scored at least one run in every inning from the third through the seventh.

The Angels were shut out until the ninth when Jim Leyritz hit a two-run homer off Doug Brocail.

In New York, Jeffrey Hammonds belted a three-

run homer and Pete Incaviglia delivered a pair of two-run singles to power the surging Baltimore Orioles to a 10-6 victory over the struggling Yankees.

Hammonds gave the Orioles a 3-0 lead in the second with a homer off starter Kenny Rogers (3-3). Baltimore made it 5-1 in the third when Incaviglia singled home Roberto Alomar and Cal Ripken. The Orioles broke the game open with five runs in the fifth, chasing Rogers.

Scott Kamieniecki (4-2) earned the win against his former team, allowing four runs and seven hits over five innings.

In Toronto, Domingo Cedeño had three hits and three RBI and Juan Gonzalez, Rusty Greer and Billy Ripken drove in two runs apiece as the Texas Rangers pounded the Blue Jays 15-5.

In Kansas City, Mark McGwire hit a two-run homer in the ninth and Jose Canseco added a two-run double in a five-run 10th as Oakland rallied for an 8-6 win over the Royals.

At Minnesota, Marty Cordova hit a three-run homer and Chuck Knoblauch drew a bases-loaded walk in a six-run ninth as the Twins edged the Seattle Mariners 11-10.

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Sotomayor to make comeback in France

HAVANA (R) — Cuba's world record-holding high jumper Javier Sotomayor will skip a star-studded showdown meet in Toronto this weekend, instead making his comeback to competition from injury in France next Monday, Cuban sports officials said Tuesday.

Sotomayor, who underwent treatment for injuries to his knee and heel following a poor showing in the Atlanta Olympics last July, has not competed since those Games.

Lazaro Betancourt, an official of the National Athletics Federation, told reporters Sotomayor would take part in a meet next Monday in Saint Denis, France, and then would probably go on to a meeting in Rome at the end of the week.

This would mean Sotomayor, 29, would not be attending Sunday's all-star extravaganza in Toronto, where he was to compete head-to-head against Olympic champion Charles Austin.

The Toronto affair features a 150-meter showdown between Olympic 100 meter champion Donovan Bailey and 200 and 400 meter gold medalist Michael Johnson for the mythical crown of world's fastest human with a \$1 million prize to the winner.

Betancourt gave no reasons for the decision to send Sotomayor to France, although he added the athlete was in good form following a recent training camp in Puerto Rico.

There was speculation that Toronto was deemed too demanding given the athlete has been out of competition for 10 months.

Sotomayor and other leading Cuban athletes such as long jumper Ivan Pedroso and middle distance runner Ana Fidelia Quirot will spend much of the European summer season based at Guadalajara, Spain, before attending the World Championships in Athens in August.



Disgraced Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson tries on a new pair of running shoes outside Ontario Provincial Court in Brampton west of Toronto May 27. Johnson was in court after he filed suit to win the right to race again from the IAAF. The court said it will not hear the case until July 21 (Reuters photo)

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French Open

Novotna, Kafelnikov move into the 3rd round Ivanisevic, Huber among first seeds eliminated

PARIS (Agencies) — Defending champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who has said it would take a "miracle" to retain his title, swept into the third round of the French Open on Wednesday with another straight-set victory.

The third-seeded Russian powered to a 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 win over France's Guillaume Raoux, one of Kafelnikov's most impressive performances since returning to action after a three-month layoff with a broken finger.

Eighth-seeded Alex Corretja of Spain, the most consistent performer on clay this year, recovered from a slow start to down German qualifier Jens Knippschild 4-6, 6-1, 6-1, 7-6 (10-8).

"I didn't feel so well when I woke up this morning," Corretja said. "In your job, sometimes you go to the office and don't feel that well. You're not 100 per cent. Today I started at 25 per cent and moved up."

Unseeded Andrei Medvedev, a dark horse, defeated Juan Albert Viloca 6-4, 6-3, 6-4.

In other men's action, top-ranked Pete Sampras faced Francisco Clavet, another from the Spanish army of clay courters, and 1995 champion Thomas Muster met Jeff Targano.

On the women's side, fourth-seeded Jana Novotna, seeking the first Grand Slam title of her career, reeled off 11 straight games to beat Jana Kandarr 6-4, 6-0 and reach the third round.

Novotna, 28, a 10-year veteran on the tour, is playing some of the best clay-court tennis of her career this year. She beat Monica Seles to win the Madrid title last weekend.

A semifinalist here last year, Novotna fell behind 4-1 against the 77th-ranked German. But she won the next 11 games to advance without problems on a windy day.

Two more seeded women advanced. No. 11 Amanda Coetzer, who beat Amy Frazier 7-6 (7-5), 6-4, and No. 13 Irina Spirlea, a 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 winner over Ines Gorrochategui.

Later Wednesday, five-time champion and No. 2 seed Steffi Graf faced French wild card entry Amelie Mauresmo.

The tournament's first major casualty was fourth-seeded Goran Ivanisevic, who was upset Tuesday in the first round by Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson.

Ivanisevic is one of the

biggest servers in the game and for a long time he has been considered a potential Grand Slam winner. His goal for 1997, he had said, was finally to win a major. His season, however, was suspended for six weeks when he broke his finger when slamming shut a door at home in Split, Croatia.

The red clay of Roland Garros is the least suited surface to Ivanisevic's serve-and-volley game and he had already lost here in the first round in 1995.

Against Gustafsson, Ivanisevic had mostly himself to blame. He made 76 unforced errors and converted only two of 18 break points in a 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-3), 6-3 loss.

The Croatian was so dejected by his defeat that he even put into doubt his hopes for Wimbledon, the next Grand Slam event on the schedule.

"It's going to be tough for me to get motivated to play Wimbledon," he said.

Ivanisevic was runner-up in Wimbledon in 1992 and 1994, his best Grand Slam showings so far.

Also Tuesday, Jim Courier, unseeded but with the pedigree of titles here in



Michael Chang of the U.S. waves as he leaves the court after winning his match against Rodolphe Gilbert of France at Roland Garros stadium. Chang defeated Gilbert 6-2 6-3 6-2 (Reuters photo)



Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands eyes the ball as he prepares a backhand during his match against Scott Draper of Austria in the French Open at Roland Garros stadium. Krajicek defeated Draper 7-6 6-2 6-1 (Reuters photo)

1991 and 1992, fought back from two sets down, only to go out in five against Magnus Larsson, 6-1, 6-2, 6-4, 1-6, 6-4.

The first women's seed to be ousted was No. 8 Anke Huber, who lost 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 to Kimberly Po.

The two women seeded to meet in the final, 16-year-old Martina Hingis and Graf, her predecessor as No. 1 in the world, both

took less than an hour to advance Tuesday.

Playing her first match after seven weeks following a fall from a horse and left-knee surgery, Hingis routed Henrieta Nagyova 6-0, 6-2 in 51 minutes.

"It was a very nice feeling to be on court again after seven weeks. I was missing it," Hingis said. "I played almost everything perfect."

Graf, herself coming

back from left-knee surgery and a three-month layoff, beat Paola Suarez 6-1, 6-4 in 54 minutes.

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Head of Special Tender's Committee

French Open diary

Name game sends Venus into orbit: Exciting teenage newcomer Venus Williams of the United States hopes she can go all the way in her first ever Grand Slam tournament here.

The 16-year-old U.S. star would be almost deified back home if she lifts the title.

But the youngster, named after a Roman goddess, says her distinctive name is "almost a curse."

She explains: "Every time I go on the phone, people say 'what's your name?' I say, 'Venus'. 'What, Venus?' 'Who?' 'Venus.' 'What Zena?' 'No, Venus.' Every day people send me mail saying Venus. It's very discouraging."

But as she reaches for the stars here, Venus might find by the end of the fortnight everyone will know her name.

Grass not so green for Ivanisevic: Big-serving Goran Ivanisevic might be expected to feel at home on the lush green turf of Wimbledon, where he hopes to forget his first round French Open loss to Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson.

But the Croatian, twice runner-up at the All-England club, says the shock defeat won't make him rush over the Channel straight away.

"You can get crazy in England playing on grass every day. You don't play — you just serve and return," said Ivanisevic, who notches up an average 15 aces per match.

Lucky 13 for Delaire: It was a case of 'lucky 13' for Frenchman Olivier Delaire when he beat Britain's 14th seed Tim Henman in the first round.

Struggling at two sets to one down, Delaire finally turned the match in his favour in the third game of the 4th set.

With Henman serving, Delaire finally forced the break after the 13th deuce in a game which lasted almost half an hour.

Champion still French 'marathon man' French wildcard Thierry Champion is the 'marathon man' of Roland Garros, having won his customary five-setter in the first round.

Champion has now been taken five sets seven times since 1990.... and he's won six of them.

Hingis is early starter: Martina Hingis is the youngest-ever World No. 1 having taken away Steffi Graf's status at the age of 16. But France's world junior champion Amelie Mauresmo, a "veteran" by comparison at 17, thinks she got off to an earlier start than most.

"I've not been programmed, unlike Hingis, who must already have been playing in her mother's womb," ventured Mauresmo as she prepared to face defending champion Steffi Graf in Wednesday's second-round.

Out to seed: Four seeds have made an early exit at the French Open by crashing at the first hurdle.

Among the men, Goran Ivanisevic, seeded four, was the major surprise as he fell to Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden. Spain's Alberto Berasategui and Britain's Tim Henman, seeded 12 and 14, also failed to make it.

Anke Huber is the only women's seed missing from the second round draw, after succumbing to American Kimberly Po.

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ON TOP OF WHAT USED TO BE HOME: Palestinian woman Maryam Bana (right) sits with three of her 20 grandchildren and one of her three sons on the ruins of her family home beneath the walls of the Old City (rear) after it was demolished by Jerusalem municipal inspectors who claimed it was built without a permit May 28. Family members attacked the Israeli government for allowing the construction of thousands of homes for Jews in East Jerusalem while demolishing their house (Reuters photo)

Killers of Australian nurse deserve no mercy — brother

SYDNEY (AFP) — The brother of Australian nurse Yvonne Gilford who was murdered in Saudi Arabia last December, confirmed Wednesday he would not ask for clemency for two British women to save them from execution if they are convicted of her murder.

The trial in Saudi Arabia of nurses Deborah Parry and Lucille McLauchlan was adjourned on Tuesday to allow an approach to the Gilford family seeking clemency if they are convicted.

Under Islamic law, the family has the right to decide what punishment should be imposed and they face public beheading unless Mr. Gilford agrees to ask for mercy.

Parry, of Hampshire, England, and McLauchlan, of Dunfermline, Scotland, have denied the murder and said they were coerced into previous confessions.

Speaking on behalf of his family, brother Frank Gilford said he had no doubt the pair had committed

the crime and he would not change his view which he said was based on evidence not raised in the trial so far.

His decision was also based on "the horrendous crime, the way she was killed," Mr. Gilford said at his home in Jamestown, south Australia.

"It's something I'll have to live with if they're executed. It's a very difficult decision but we stand by it. I'm convinced about our decision through evidence that has come from our lawyers but hasn't been released."

He said he did not want to be in a position to decide the fate of Parry, 41, and McLauchlan, 31, but accepted his role.

"I'd love not to have to make this decision. I'd bloody love it. I'd love to be just way the hell out of it."

"I don't envy myself in this position and I don't envy anybody to ever be in a position like it."

Mr. Gilford said he had tried to take into account

what Yvonne might have done if she had been put in the same position.

"It's a hard decision to take. I thought about my sister and wondered what she would think or decide, and this is the decision we've come to," Mr. Gilford said.

Mr. Gilford admitted a decision resulting in executions would give him no peace of mind, but added: "Put yourself in the same situation — what if your sister or your daughter it happened to? What would your reaction be?"

"It's easy to say one thing but when you've landed in the middle of it, it's a hard decision."

Lawyers for the British nurses have asked Mr. Gilford to travel to Saudi Arabia at their cost, to meet the pair, but Mr. Gilford said he would not make the trip.

"I do not want a circus. I simply want justice," he said, adding that he offered sympathy to the families of Parry and McLauchlan.

Human rights group slams Israel's 'no-trial' detention of Palestinians

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli human rights group protested Wednesday over the detention without trial of nearly 250 Palestinians, mostly opponents of peace agreements with the Jewish State.

A report by the rights group B'tselem said that half the 249 jailed Palestinians have been held for more than a year, and 11 for more than three years, under "administrative detention" laws permitting imprisonment without trial.

"This is an abusive use of administrative detention, which Israeli authorities turn to when they have no evidence against the suspect," B'tselem said in its 50-page report.

Administrative detainees

are generally held for renewable six-month periods.

The report's author, Jessica Montell, said administrative detainees accused of "endangering state security" were for the most part not hardcore militants but intellectuals and social workers opposed to the Israeli-Palestinian Oslo partial self-rule agreements.

"This amounts to an attack on freedom of expression," she said. "If these same criteria were applied in Israel, behind bars," she said, referring to the right-wing political party of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

At a press conference called to release the B'tselem report, Rimzagh Qattamesh told reporters about the adminis-

trative detention of her husband Ribbi.

"For six months, I couldn't even see my husband," a lawyer and writer considered close to the left-wing Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine who has been held since March 1994, she said.

"My children and I were making plans for the future, and suddenly our dreams collapsed," she said, adding that her husband's detention orders have already been renewed seven times.

B'tselem Director Eytan Felder said the administrative detainees did not even enjoy the support of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority in its negotiations with Israel on prisoner releases because of their

opposition to the Oslo peace accords.

Mr. Felder also chided Mr. Netanyahu for pursuing the policy of administrative detention while at the same time trumpeting the importance of the principle of "innocent until proven guilty" in his own recent brush with the law over a high-level influence peddling scandal.

"Why doesn't he use the same standards for Palestinian prisoners?" he asked.

In addition to the administrative detainees, Israel holds around 2,750 other Palestinians in its jails, 600 of them arrested in the occupied territories and currently in the hands of the army, according to B'tselem.

Religious newspaper drops ads after curse of Ribbi

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli religious newspaper announced Wednesday that it was dropping all advertisements for tobacco products after a leading rabbi placed a curse on cigarette manufacturers.

"This decision is going to cost our newspaper 300,000 shekels (about \$100,000) a year," said Eli Simhayof, editor of the weekly Yom Leyom, the official mouthpiece of the powerful ultra-orthodox Shas Party.

Mr. Simhayof said he acted after the spiritual leader of Shas, Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, declared over the weekend that "the managers of cigarette manufacturing companies bear a heavy sin and will suffer divine punishment" for promoting death through smoking.

Mr. Yosef, whose pronouncements are considered law by many followers, added that smokers "should have to go before a religious court and receive 40 lashes."

"After (Yosef's) statement, how could his newspaper continue to advertise for cigarettes?" Mr. Simhayof said.

"I just hope we will be able to make up the lost revenues, maybe by advertising for soft drinks."

Other influential rabbis came out in support of Mr. Yosef's ruling and warning to tobacco companies.

"I hope to sign up 50 important rabbis to back the declarations," said Rabbi Yehoshua Scheinberg, chairman of a religious medical organization, Rafa.

Iraq asks U.N. to remove U.S. opposition to medicine supplies

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq called on U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan Wednesday to personally intervene to remove U.S. obstacles to the arrival and distribution of medicine here under the oil-for-food agreement.

In a message to Mr. Annan, Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Al Sahaf urged him to "take responsibility and personally intervene to urgently find a solution to these humanitarian problems" as provided for under the U.N.-Iraq accord.

In Iraq's latest appeal to the United Nations, Mr. Sahaf said: "The U.S. representative on the U.N. Sanctions Committee is responsible for rejecting more than 40 contracts linked to the purchase of pharmaceutical products."

The American claims that "these medicines are not on the list of pharmaceutical products that was established and approved by the U.N. secretary general," Mr. Sahaf charged.

The committee approves contracts for Iraq to buy food and medicine with funds it gets from selling limited quantities of crude oil. The oil-for-food accord which went into effect in December was the first partial lifting of the U.N. embargo imposed on Iraq in 1990 after it invaded Kuwait.

Although allied forces drove Iraq out of Kuwait the following year, Baghdad remains under U.N. sanctions until the international body can verify that Iraq has destroyed its weapons of mass destruction. The first ship-

ment of medicine purchased under the agreement arrived in Iraq earlier this month.

Also Wednesday, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz held talks with a Russian official in Baghdad on efforts to get the U.N. sanctions lifted, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said.

Andrei Vdovin, head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department for the Middle East and North Africa, arrived Tuesday for a visit of several days, INA said.

Russia has said several times that it wants to resume economic cooperation with Iraq, and the two countries signed a major agreement in March to develop an Iraqi oil field.

But the contract cannot go into effect until the sanctions are lifted.

Released Palestinian journalist to halt parliament broadcasts

RAMALLAH (AP) — A West Bank university suspended its live broadcasts from the Palestinian Legislative Council Wednesday after the week-long detention of a Palestinian-American journalist in charge of the programme.

Criticism of Yasser Arafat's government is often heard on the legislature floor. The direct broadcasts apparently angered the Palestinian president who ordered the arrest of journalist Daoud Kuttab, head of the media department at Al Quds University in Ramallah.

No charges were filed against Mr. Kuttab, who said upon his release Tuesday that he had received permission to broadcast the legislature's sessions from Council Speaker Ahmed Qureia.

"What I have done is not a

crime," Mr. Kuttab told reporters Wednesday. "The programme aims to increase the people's awareness of democracy."

Al Quds University President Sari Nusseibeh said, however, that the live broadcasts would be suspended until the issue of licensing had been cleared up with the Palestinian National Authority.

"Our main concern was to get him out of jail and we can clear the aspects of legality," Mr. Nusseibeh said, adding he never expected to get "freedom on a silver platter."

Council members sharply criticized Mr. Kuttab's arrest during Wednesday's session, attended by Mr. Kuttab minus the cameras.

"We should understand one thing — that Daoud's arrest means arrest of the council," said Lawmaker Hikmet Ziad. "He was con-

tracted through us and silencing him means silencing us."

Mr. Kuttab said he hoped the legislators would fight for his right to continue the broadcasts.

"It feels good. I wish we had our cameras rolling, but hopefully that will be resolved soon," Mr. Kuttab said. "I hope that they can translate their words into actions."

Mr. Arafat's government has been criticized for frequent human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests, torture of detainees and restrictions on the freedom of speech.

Mr. Kuttab, who was born in the West Bank, was a teenager when his parents immigrated to the United States. The family lived in Bradley Beach, N.J., for about 10 years. Mr. Kuttab occasionally writes for American newspapers.

Congressional leader denounces China, urges vote against MFN

DETROIT (AFP) — Calling Beijing's rulers "totalitarians, the top democrat in the U.S. House of Representatives Tuesday called for revoking China's Most Favored Nation trading status.

"What have we gained from trafficking with a tyranny that debases the dignity of one-fifth of the human race?" House minority leader Richard Gephardt, a likely presidential contender in 2000, said in a speech before the Detroit Economic Club.

"What is gained by constructive engagement with slave labour? Our trade policy with China has failed," he said.

Because Chinese workers are paid little or nothing, stifling their demand for

U.S.-made products, Mr. Gephardt said there was "nothing 'free' about our trade with China — in fact it comes to us at great cost and little benefit. Last year we had an almost \$40 billion trade deficit with China."

Speaking against the argument that human rights improvements will follow economic growth, Mr. Gephardt said "free-market Stalinism offers the benefits to relatively few, and real freedom to none."

Tuesday's speech places Mr. Gephardt as a leader of Democrats opposing the position taken by their own president, Bill Clinton, who favours MFN renewal with China. Mr. Clinton earlier this month asked Congress to renew MFN status,

despite escalating concerns about human rights issues in China and the reversion of Hong Kong to Beijing.

Liberal Democrats — many, like Mr. Gephardt, allied with labour unions — have formed an unusual coalition against MFN with conservative Republicans who have condemned religious persecution in China.

But even if the U.S. House of Representatives votes this summer against continued MFN status with China, the vote appears unlikely to withstand a Clinton veto.

In his speech Mr. Gephardt compared denying China's MFN status with the successful use of economic sanctions against South Africa under the racist apartheid system.

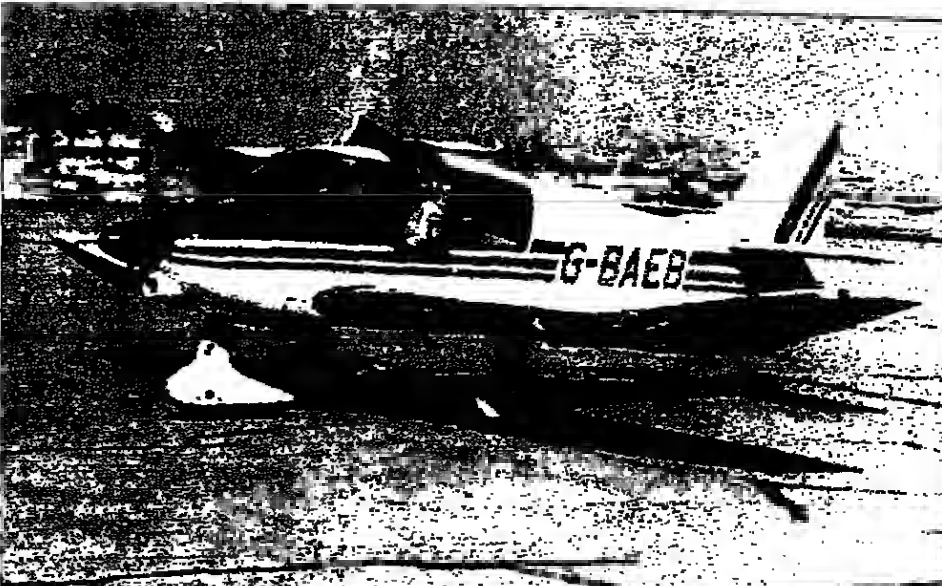
British pilots fly into Jordan fund raising for Amal Cancer Centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two British pilots, Nigel Camps and Alex Zomoya Wednesday flew into Jordan from Britain in a single engine aircraft making 10 stops in five countries to raise funds for the benefit of cancer patients at the Amal Cancer Centre.

The two pilots whose mission is sponsored by the Anglo-Jordanian Society handed a cheque for £13,000 to their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein and Princess Alia Al Faisal who received them at Marka Airport.

Prince Faisal handed the cheque to Abdullah Al Khatib rapporteur of the Jordanian National task force for the centre as a society contribution to the treatment of poor patients.

Prince Faisal paid tribute to the society for its efforts to help the centre which



offers service to patients in the Middle East region and lauded the two pilots for their part in raising the funds for the society.

The society which operates under the patronage of

Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath and Great Britain's Duke and Duchess of Kent was founded in Britain in 1980 and aims at promoting

Jordanian-British ties.

Society member Itham Matalqa said the society will pursue efforts to raise contributions and to help provide qualified cadres for the Amal Cancer Centre.



Pelican flies back to Beijing zoo after holiday

BEIJING (AFP) — A pelican that escaped from the Beijing Zoo returned to captivity of its own accord this week after spending a leisurely day in a city park, the official Xinhua news agency reported Wednesday. The one-year-old bird was spotted cruising the lake at Beijing's purple bumburyard park Tuesday afternoon, a day after it snuck out of its enclosure at the zoo, it said. Park staff, after confirming its identity with zoo officials, made failed attempts to recapture it. Later in the afternoon, the pelican took wing, circled the park and returned home, apparently satisfied with its holiday, the report said. Pelicans are under state protection in China.

Massage pillow sends ripples through Sri Lanka politics

COLOMBO (R) — A battery-operated massage pillow belonging to an opposition deputy caused a scare in Sri Lanka's parliament after police seized it as a potential security threat. The Midweek Mirror said on Wednesday. The newspaper said that the pillow was discovered in the car of former Speaker M.H. Mohammad during a routine check at the entrance of the high-security parliament building in the Colombo suburb of Sri Jayawardenepura on Tuesday. Mohammad told parliament he was not amused and said the police action amounted to harassment.

Madonna splits up with her baby's dad — tabloid

LONDON (AFP) — Madonna has split from Carlos Leon, the father of her seven-month-old daughter Lourdes, the Sun tabloid reported on Wednesday. Leon, 30, the pop diva's former physical trainer, stayed in Los Angeles when Madonna and child went to settle down in Miami, it said, quoting Leon's father Armando Leon. But the elder Leon added: "I don't think Madonna will stop us or Carlos from seeing the baby. That's blood." The Sun also quoted a friend of Leon's as saying that the father was looking for a new home close to one owned in Los Angeles by Madonna — which the superstar would pay for. Madonna, 38, divorced actor Sean Penn in 1989 after a three-year marriage. They were childless.

Lost wallet puts escaped prisoner back behind bars

GENOA, Italy (R) — An escaped Italian prisoner was back behind bars on Tuesday after he lost his wallet and police telephoned him to come and collect it. Luigi de Chirico, 36, slipped away from a company where he was allowed to work during a four-month prison sentence in the central town of Terni, but lost his wallet containing identity papers and his cellphone number. A police officer called De Chirico on his cellphone and arrested him when he arrived — on a stolen moped — to pick up the wallet. De Chirico now faces fresh charges of evading jail and theft.